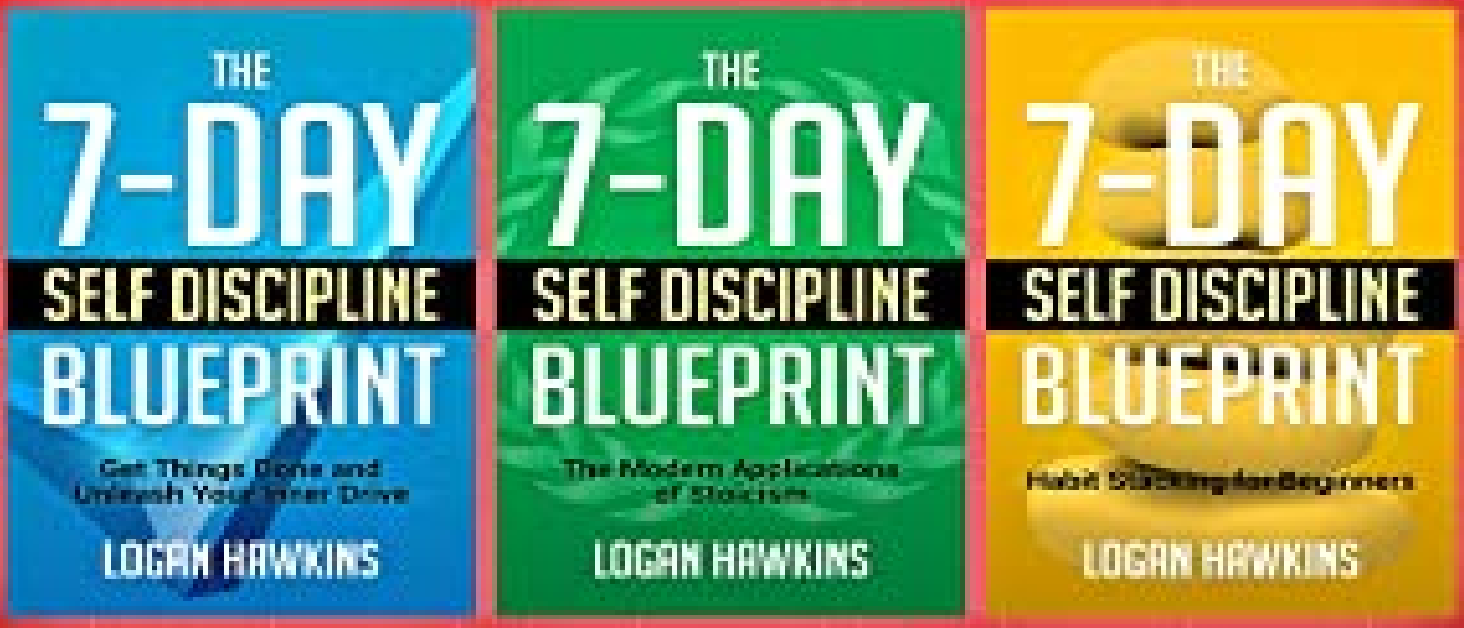
THE SELF DISCIPLINE SERIES

Books 1-3



LOGAN HAWKINS

The 7-Day Self Discipline Blueprint

Book 1-3 of the Self Discipline Series

Logan Hawkins

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BOOK ONE

The 7-Day Self Discipline Blueprint

Get Things Done and Unleash Your Inner Drive

Book 1 of the Self Discipline Series

Logan Hawkins

Introduction: Get Things Done

7 Days Self-Discipline Blueprint: Get Things Done and Unleash Your Inner Drive is packed with practical information that will help you to increase your self-discipline to achieve success in life.

We all set many goals in life and hope to reach them. Unfortunately, many of us do not have the necessary discipline to make those goals a reality. Somehow, we lose our passion and do not strive to do what needs to be done after setting goals. Every year we set resolutions for the New Year with renewed hope that at the end of the calendar year various aspects of our lives will be changed. However, our enthusiasm and motivation gradually wanes off and end up back where we started. Why is that?

As you know, you cannot go far in life if you do not do everything in your power to make your goals a reality. You cannot pursue your dreams and update your goals unless you are determined, strong-willed, and have the power to control the emotions, desires, and feelings that destroy your goals and accomplishments.

To be successful, you need to master your thoughts and emotions as well as train endurance and stamina, which are extremely important components of self-discipline. Cultivating these traits may sound difficult at this time, but when you come to the last page of this book, self-discipline will be easy for you; you will not find it hard to practice self-discipline and pursue everything you desire. Make the most of this wonderful opportunity and learn how to unlock your self-discipline and unleash your inner drive. Just remember, the only person who can help your dreams become a reality is yourself – and by reading this book and engraining the concepts into your life, you have taken one step closer towards achieving this.

Chapter 1: The Fundamentals

What is Willpower?

Willpower can be thought of as the ability to set a course of action and work towards it by fully engaging and being proactive. It is your ability to control any harmful or unnecessary impulses; the ability to overcome

procrastination and laziness as well as the ability to arrive at a decision and follow through with perseverance and persistence until success is accomplished. You can also think of it as an inner power or drive that helps you to overcome the mental resistance to take action.

What's the Difference with Self Discipline?

Believe it or not, these two are quite different. While willpower is necessary to catapult you into action, you need self-discipline if you truly want to realize your true potential. Self-discipline is the companion of willpower and allows you to be consistent and persevere in whatever you do. It gives you the ability to withstand difficulties whether they are emotional or mental. Additionally, self-discipline gives you the ability to reject instant gratification for the greater good (for something better) even if this requires a lot more effort and time.

Therefore, if you are to develop strong self-discipline and willpower, you ultimately become conscious of your subconscious impulses and acquire the ability to reject them if they cause you to slow down and lose momentum. In essence, self-discipline coupled with strong willpower can allow you to choose your behaviour and reactions instead of being enslaved by them. You will start to feel more powerful and in charge of yourself and your surroundings when you muster self-discipline.

Before we start discussing various ways and methods you can use to develop this ability, it is important to first touch on the importance or significance of self-discipline to succeed and discuss reasons why most of us lack this. Delving into these two aspects will help you understand the importance of developing self-confidence.

Why Do You Need Self-Discipline in Life?

When you lack self-discipline, you lack self-control. You do not stay dedicated to your missions and easily lose sight of what is important and beneficial to you. Self-discipline seeks to reverse that; it helps you to stick to whatever it is you have planned to do no matter the level of discomfort or difficulties that you face along the way.

✓ Self-discipline allows you to exercise control over yourself and avoid thinking or feeling negative. When you are self-disciplined, you think before acting, brainstorm easily, think lucidly, focus on important tasks, easily complete all the chores you have started, and successfully carry out your plans and decisions despite obstacles, hardships, and inconveniences that come your way.

✓ You start to make the right choices by evaluating situations by weighing their pros and cons; the opportunity cost factors in because you are momentum driven and strive to complete tasks in as little time as possible. When you are self-disciplined, you seldom make erratic impulsive decisions.

✓ You will become happier and more peaceful. A study showed that those who had high self-control were happier as compared to those who lacked this ability, due to dealing with their goal conflicts a lot better, wasting less time on unhealthy behaviour and making positive decisions easily.

✓ Self-discipline allows you to continue working on a project even when your enthusiasm has faded away. The responsibility that you owe yourself and the realization that you alone are in charge of your destiny allows you to keep going.

✓ It becomes easier to build character, inner strength, and stability; now it seems more natural to control your impatience, anger, instinctive reactions, and appetite. As a result, it becomes second nature to build and maintain relationships, command respect from others as well as control your thoughts, reactions and ultimately achieve everything you've set yourself to do.

Why Is Your Self-Discipline Lacking?

Have you ever wondered why…

You choose to watch TV instead of going for a walk, even though you know walking is good for you and releases those wonderful endorphins that make you feel great?

You keep procrastinating on doing something important like starting a business or asking for a pay raise to justify your true worth, even though you know that this is what you want?

It seems so daunting to overcome laziness, stop excessive eating, stop smoking or to stop your lack of assertiveness?

Well, the answer is simple; you currently lack the ability to prioritize what is important in life, not value the precious commodity of time enough or are just not motivated to improve your situation. These are all the shortfalls of not possessing self-discipline.

Do you often say to yourself; “I wish I could have the willpower and self-discipline to get things done”? If you are aware of what is needed to accomplish goals, why do you procrastinate?

Let us discuss a few reasons why this appears to be a problem in so many people.

Self-Discipline Is Not an Inbuilt Ability

It is not something you are born with; it is something you work on and develop. The disciplined have worked hard to build and perfect this strength on a daily basis – never underestimate the power of routine.

Negative Mental and Emotional Programming

Not all of us have positive and healthy programming (mental programming). In our childhood and throughout our lives, many of us go through various terrible incidents that induce negative thinking in us, which shapes negative behavior and keeps us from gaining self-discipline.

Negative Environments

A positive environment is mandatory in the development of self-discipline and willpower. If the people that surround you are not supportive and constantly demoralize you, you will never be able to discern right and wrong and discipline yourself. If you are not lucky enough to reside in a

positive environment, you need to work on creating one for yourself to gain self-discipline.

Fear of Failure

The fear of failing at something often keeps us from taking the initiative. When you cannot initiate tasks and activities, you cannot move towards your goals. This lowers your inner strength, an integral and essential part of developing willpower.

Laziness

If you are incredibly lazy, you never feel like doing anything and will always procrastinate. It will seem much more alluring to take the easy way out and procrastinate even if a task is critical to your attainment of your certain goals. This is what separates successful people from the masses. To develop self-discipline, laziness and procrastination have to go: it is that simple.

Low Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

When you are not sure of yourself and what you are capable of, you cannot truly value yourself. When you are not aware of your strengths and lack confidence, developing the discipline to actually to get things done can be a great challenge.

Easily Falling Prey to Temptation

If you easily fall prey to different things that lure you away from your goal, then your self-discipline is definitely lacking. To gain restraint and self-will, it is essential to overcome your weaknesses and temptations.

A Lack of Purpose

To be self-disciplined, your life must have a purpose, a goal you look forward to and stay dedicated to. This means that you should not be easily content with your current situation but strive to continuously improve.

By now, you will probably have noticed one or several reasons why your self-discipline is wanting. So what is it specifically that you can do in order to transform your life? That’s what we will be learning in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: A Quick Snapshot

Self-discipline appears to be the thing that everybody desires. Few are lucky enough to be so self-motivated that self-discipline isn't necessary. Self-discipline is the ability to do something that you don't feel like doing. We each have a restricted supply, but we can grow our capacity to be self-disciplined with time.

Those with high levels of self-discipline have been found to be feel better than those with low levels. It's believed this is due to lowered internal conflict. Those with less self-discipline are continuously having a hard time making choices in between contending goals. Those with more self-discipline decide more rationally and far more rapidly. Increase your ability to have self-discipline by understanding that:

1. Success without discipline is a myth. Successful people appear to have 10 times more skill than the rest, however, successful people work very hard to be successful. The ability to manage your thoughts and actions develops success. Hard work requires discipline, since it usually isn't fun.

2. Avoid waiting until you feel motivated to take action. With all the forms of home entertainment and interruption we have readily available, it's sensible to presume that we ought to feel inspired to do the things that have to be accomplished.

Quality of life and convenience are frequently at odds. Self-discipline can be utilized to engage in activities that aren't comfortable. Only then will you take pleasure in a high quality of life.

3. Discover how to finish tasks. Let finishing become your code. Become a finisher. Regardless of the task, persevere to the end. Is the dish rack full,

but there are still a couple of more dishes to wash? Make room and get it done. When you start something, finish it.

4. Do the hardest thing first. Your self-discipline is highest early in the day. So, get that difficult item crossed off your to-do list as quickly as possible.

5. Learn how to stick with pain. Do you have the urge to go to the kitchen for a treat? Make yourself wait another 30 minutes. Whenever you're feeling uncomfortable, make yourself stick with it just a little bit longer. Teach yourself that your discomfort is just a feeling based upon things you aren't yet comfortable with. You do not need to cave in.

6. Take some time to enjoy yourself. This is the very best way to replenish your self-discipline. Stress, appetite, and tiredness drain your capability to practice self-discipline. So, eat a good meal and get a full night of sleep; take part in pleasurable activities.

7. Know your outcome. Whether the result is a shoveled driveway, a new fishing boat, or a finished novel, know the preferred result. Self-discipline ends up being simpler when you're able to keep a long-term perspective.

8. Develop habits. Developing a practice of vacuuming the living room every Wednesday gets rid of the need for discipline. Practices are powerful. Put yourself on autopilot and utilize the power of practices to your advantage.

9. Meditate. Studies have actually revealed that mediation strengthens the part of the brain responsible for self-discipline. Buy a book or find a local meditation group.

10. Use affirmations. When you feel your willpower weakening, recite favorable affirmations to yourself. Keep your mind focused on something favorable while you get your work done.

11. Provide yourself with regular breaks. Setting a schedule that's too aggressive will quickly diminish your self-discipline. Offer yourself regular breaks to ensure that you stay alert and fresh.

Just how much self-discipline do you have? Your level of self-control can impact your diet, health, physical fitness, financial resources, profession, and relationships. Self-control is a learned behavior, so you can cultivate your self-discipline if you so choose. With sufficient self-discipline, you can attain any objective.

Chapter 3: How To Increase Willpower

One of the tenets of personal development is to bring about a behavior change. If you want to develop yourself, you need to change your behavior to some degree. It is not necessarily overhauling yourself, but it's still a change.

The whole reason of self-improvement is to improve upon what you are. Some things are not working for you because the necessary behavior is absent. Or you just want to improve upon things, and you need new skills to achieve this improvement. Behavior change could also mean learning new skills.

When you learn new skills and actually these skills, the behavior change has taken place With this change, you exploit the benefits of the new skills. So, how does one change behavior? At the root of changing behavior is our capacity of self-discipline. This is also called self-control or willpower.

You can have all the knowledge in the world. But if you don't have the self-discipline to incorporate that knowledge in your behavior, the knowledge is of no use.

For example, you know that you are not supposed to do certain things. But if you do those things anyway, what is the point of the knowledge? Personal development experts will tell you this: you have to set goals, divide tasks into sub tasks, prioritize tasks, write journals and have a positive attitude in spite of setbacks.

But if you don't have self-discipline to put all this advice into action, you won't succeed! It may also lead you to blame that expert advice which doesn't work.

What is self-discipline, though? It's the eternal conflict between the dual self. We always have a self who is conscious about long-term goals. He gets and remembers what is the right thing to do for us.

Then we have the other self which is impulsive and indulgent. This other self is always getting distracted towards the guilty pleasures that we should not explore. This other self is the one which blocks us from taking the initiative that we really should take.

The impulsive self is wanting a sweet treat, being lazy and just watching TV while the better self is aware that those are bad things. Also, one should really be eating healthy in general, exercising and focusing on making that phone call and writing that journal.

At the deepest level, the impulsive self is a primitive self who is impulsive, craving and desires things. The better self is our analytical self. This is the neo-cortex in action. This is the recent part of our brain which engages in complex functions. This part of the brain sees the big picture; it weighs different options and knows what is right versus wrong.

Who doesn't want success, good relationships, health and well-being? Who doesn't want to be happy? All of these can be achieved through proper self-discipline.

The fundamental reason most people don't succeed even after reading books, taking courses and attending seminars is the failure to exercise self-discipline and giving into the impulsive self.

In the root of all personal problems lies the failure of self-discipline. The fundamental reason people are not able to achieve success is because of them not being able to maintain self-discipline.

Self-discipline is the biggest human strength.

You may wonder if it's possible to increase self-discipline.

The answer is a resounding YES.

One can definitely increase the levels of willpower he or she possesses.

Willpower is a limited resource. In other words, self-discipline will deplete. Right after exercising self-discipline, your willpower will deplete and if you later have to exercise your willpower, you don't do that well.

Yet if you practice self-discipline over and over, it improves. This may sound counterintuitive. We just said that using willpower depletes it, but on the other hand, we are saying that using it over and over improves it.

The best analogy to understand this is that of muscle. Right after use, the muscle is fatigued and painful. But if you keep exercising repeatedly, your muscle strength and tone improves.

If you intentionally practice self-discipline again and again, you'll build it up. You will increase the level of self-discipline.

What are the ways to improve willpower?

Last decade of research in human psychology has revealed many ways in which one can improve the willpower or the self-discipline. A Stanford psychologist, Kelly McGonigal, identifies following four methods of improving the willpower.

1. Get enough sleep.

One of the most common ways to improve willpower is through more sleep.

Lack of sleep actually prevents us from operating at most willpower capacity. If we are sleep deprived, our prefrontal cortex doesn't activate enough, which means our restraining mind is not in action and we easily give in to the impulses.

It is important to get a good night's sleep. For most people 7 hours is what is required. If you haven't slept 7 hours and even if you don't feel sleepy, your cortex is still not working to full capacity. Hence, its very important to sleep 7 hours.

Meditation is one of the tools that can be effectively used to help with the increasing amount of sleep you can have.

Forgive yourself.

We are usually critical of ourselves. Especially when we have a setback, we tend to criticize ourselves.

Scientists found that for reasons we don't fully understand yet, when we criticize ourselves or when we are harsh on ourselves for setbacks, we tend to repeat such setbacks or the indulgent behavior.

On the other hand, when you forgive yourself for the setbacks, it seems to have an effect of preventing future relapses.

So, learn to forgive yourself for setbacks along your journey.

Be mindful of distracting urges.

One of the most important tool for boosting self-discipline is the awareness of your urges and impulses.

If you can cultivate the mindful awareness of the distracting impulses, it becomes easier not to succumb.

When you're struck with a distracting impulse or craving that will spoil your goal, you have to become mindful of that impulse.

We feel different types of impulses. You may feel like procrastinating and you won't start reading the book or you may feel like delaying that important class registration. If your goal is to lose weight, you may feel the impulse to indulge in high calorie food.

Here is what you do:

- ✓ Notice the feeling that you're experiencing. Observe the thought that is going through your mind. Notice the impulse. Observe the itch.

✓ Become aware of the impulse. Feel the impulse. What is it? What is the feeling? Where is the feeling? Is it in certain part of the body?

✓ Attend to this inner experience. Acknowledge the experience and then accept it. Don't try to run away from the experience. Face it head on and then accept it.

✓ Once accepted, take a deep breath and pause. Give your body a chance to slow down and plan.

✓ Once you have intimately observed the inner experience, bring your attention to your goal. Think of action that will help you achieve your goal.

✓ This in essence is being mindful of your urge or impulse, then accepting it and moving on to what is the right thing to do.

✓ This may be easier to do for food impulses. It is harder to be aware of your habit to put off things. But you can get better through practice.

Visualize the roadblocks

Generally, people believe that you've to imagine success to become a success. Run of the mill self-help gurus will tell you that you've to imagine success to achieve success and not failure.

But exhaustive research proves that, just imagining the success is not enough. Yes, imagining success is a good idea. But a better idea is to regularly imagine failure! You may think that will prime you for failure, but that's what doesn't happen in practice.

One scientific study compared two groups of people. One group just visualized the end goals; they visualized achieving the end goal. Another group visualized the end goal along with the process of going through the journey to achieve success. In relation to the visualized ups and down of the process, they visualized the incremental improvement and progress that they were making along the journey. The group that visualized the journey

as well, was twice more likely to achieve the actual results. So, the journey towards achieving the goal is more important than the goal itself.

What is that you are going to inevitably face along the journey? Lots of setbacks. But for the faint heart, the setbacks will demoralize him/her and make him/her abandon his goal. There won't be just one setback, there will be plenty of them.

Failure is inevitable, and visualizing the failure prepares you for failure. After having repeatedly visualized failure along with the progress, when you're actually struck by the failure, it's no more a shock. You are already ready for it. So everyday, visualize the journey and visualize a failure.

Make friends with your future self

We don't normally think a lot about what would happen to us in future. We don't visualize our future self. Apparently, our perception of our future self could be very influential when it comes to willpower.

If you think of future self as being totally different from your current self, in other words, if you completely dissociate your current self from your future self, the future self becomes like a stranger and you wouldn't care much about future self. In such cases, you don't bother to take care of future self as for all practical purposes, future self is a stranger for you.

Different people have different perceptions about their future self. Some think of them more like their present self. Many think of their future self as very different.

The ability to disconnect from the long-term consequences of your choices primes you to be more impulsive, even in the cases where choices are not relevant to future consequences. In such cases, you become less attuned to your future concerns and plans. In reality, we know that we need to take care of our future self. We need to save for retirement, and we should take care of our future by taking care of our future self.

The key is how we can associate more with our future self? One interesting tool, researchers used effectively is letter writing. Write a letter from your

future self to your present self. Or you can write to your current self, note who you are and what is going on in your life. Chronicle your current struggles. Then reply from your future self to current self. The idea is to connect with your future self through correspondence. It is better to be optimistic in the letter that you write to future self than being completely pessimistic.

The purpose of this exercise is not to view this process as if you are fixing things for your future self. It is more about being able to feel that the future self is real and it is going to be you. It's not so much that it's going to be same person that you are now.

Even if you start imagining doing mundane stuff in the future – like driving to work or going shopping or talking with friends, or doing chores in the household – imagine vividly what it's going to feel like many years down the line.

What Does Science Have To Say About Self-Discipline?

It is a proven fact that some individuals tend to be bigger risk takers than others. Some people do not seem to have the ability to predict consequences, and even when they do, it's challenging to foresee the severity or intensity of negative implications. So, how much of our ability to practice self-discipline and control is determined by our biological anatomy? Is self-discipline just as easy of a choice for some, as it is for all? Is lacking in self-control a physical inability or more of a personal deficit that we can actively manage?

Research scientists have been asking similar questions on a myriad of personality traits. If we've accepted the various connotations concerning the deviation of right verses left brain when it comes to traits like artistically or mechanically inclined, is there are particular region in the brain that controls the ability to practice self-discipline? Some research has suggested that will power and self-disciplined focus during a challenging task may be directly correlated to carbohydrate digestion and blood glucose levels.

More complex studies that actually utilize the assistance of an MRI machine have isolated the ventral medial prefrontal cortex when patients

were faced with a tempting decision. This same region of the brain is involved in the mental processes that study participants used when making a risky financial decision during a simulation similar to video gambling. Conclusive evidence further supports that patients with a medical diagnosis of a behavioral disorder, such as attention deficit disorder or hyperactivity, may actually lack some of the imperative neuronal connections that are vital for predicting outcomes and understanding consequential results.

These doctors have discovered an anatomical connection to these decision making processes. Is it possible for all of us to have a variable level of connectivity, making it more or less feasible to practice self-discipline?

The dorsolateral prefrontal cortex may be the primary region that executes responsible decision making. So, what does that mean? It's really hard to say. Not enough scientific research has been conducted to pinpoint a particular pathway that is responsible for the blanket term of self-discipline. Even if medical researchers are able to locate an anatomical deficit that explains how and why some people have a harder time executing self-discipline, it doesn't negate the physical ability for our brains to grow, develop, and acquire new abilities. If we can perform physical therapy to regain the ability to walk, what is preventing our brains from gaining or further perfecting our ability to efficiently practice self-discipline?

Chapter 4: Determine Why You Want It

Picking up this book to read will be a common starting ground for many people, but the reasons as to why you would want to gain self-discipline will vary as we all have different goals. The most important thing you have to establish first is the light at the end of the tunnel – why you want to build momentum to transform your life. This should be the main motivator whenever you feel like you are reverting back to your old ways.

Visualize Your Objectives (Specify Your ‘What’)

You cannot achieve much in life if you don’t know what it is you really want. Be specific: if the goal is to lose weight, define how many kilos you

would like to lose and within what time period. Next, how will you measure your progress? For this to work, you will definitely need to use the power of visualization to give you a good picture of the version of yourself that you want to become.

To visualize what you truly want, set a specific time when you can sit peacefully with no nearby distractions. Relax and then begin envisioning your goals. Utilize every sense to make the vision you see yourself as real as possible.

Once you have successfully visualized accomplishing your goals, practice simulation, a helpful technique that can help you achieve your set objectives. To exercise it, imagine engaging in all the steps necessary to achieve your goal instead of solely envisioning the result. For example, in the weight loss scenario, envision eating healthily, exercising regularly, and tracking your performance.

Visualization and simulation can help you make your dream come to life. When you know your ultimate or even short-term desires, and imagine yourself achieving them, you become enthused to go after them.

As you know, you need self-discipline to achieve your goals. Visualizing and simulation alone may not help you go far in your quest towards achieving what it is you want. To create the needed spark of self-discipline, you will need to look deep within and ask yourself some honest questions. WHY do you want whatever it is you've envisioned or simulated? WHY do you need the self-discipline to make that goal a reality?

Ponder on Why You Want to Develop Self-Discipline and Why You Want What You Want

Do you have a goal that you want to achieve but have noticed that you lack the discipline to get going and to fulfill your desires?

For instance, have you noticed that you have stagnated greatly career-wise because you just don't seem to have the motivation and self-discipline to search for new opportunities consistently? Have you wanted to get into a habit of waking up early but find it hard to do because you are "nocturnal"?

Do you find it hard to follow any weight loss program simply because of your soft spot for desserts?

All these are signs of lacking self-discipline. To overcome that, your greatest booster is to have a strong enough reason as to why you truly need to transform yourself. Start with sitting alone in a quiet, peaceful place and think about why you truly want to be self-disciplined. From the above and similar questions, you can come up with reasons that are convincing enough to get you going. The best way to get started is to come up with a list of positive reasons that come with being self-disciplined; think about how you stand to gain when you build your self-discipline (to make this possible, you should define your goals, reasons, or ambitions for being self-confident). On the other hand, you will need to come up with the negative effects of doing nothing. How do you stand to lose when you do nothing about your current situation? These two lists will give you a good feel of what exactly drives you to take action.

When you clearly understand why you really want to build your self-discipline, it becomes a lot easier to customize it to suit your needs. After you have a clear understanding of why you really need self-discipline, you need to learn how to overcome your excuses.

Do Not Wait for the Right Feeling or Time

It isn’t uncommon to come across advice that tells you to do something when it feels right and stop when you don’t feel good about it (we are told to follow our gut). Well, unfortunately, this bases our actions on emotions rather than reason, which can be quite unstable and unpredictable. We all have a rollercoaster of emotions. However, developing self-discipline is about learning how to get past the barriers that we put for ourselves by waiting for a perfect time to do something.

As you noted in the first chapter, self-discipline is what keeps you focused on a goal even when you no longer feel enthusiastic about it. This reiterates the fact that emotions shouldn’t be a determining factor on whether you will get started on something or not. As such, waiting for the right emotion or time is a wrong approach to developing all the self-discipline that you need in life.

Choosing to work or not to work on a task based on the comfort it offers is the wrong approach to doing anything and a tactic that can prevent you from gaining self-discipline.

If you tend to have the thought of waiting for a good time and the right emotion to do something, counter that by revisiting your ‘why.’ Of course, when you were developing your ‘why’ list, you never factored your emotions in that so why should they be a determinant factor when it comes to getting things done? But how can you overcome the habit of waiting for the right feeling and time?

Use Your Decision-Making Skills

Charles Duhigg, the creator of ‘The Power of Habit’, clearly explains why it is difficult for us to discipline ourselves. He states that basal ganglia are a portion of your brain responsible for your habitual behaviour. This part of your brain is related to memories, patterns, and emotions - all the elements necessary for making your habits. The decisions you take are created in your prefrontal cortex. As soon as a certain behaviour turns into a habit, we stop making use of our decision-making ability and start functioning on ‘auto-pilot’ instead, which is your basal ganglia.

This means that if you are to break a bad habit and build a new or healthy habit, you need to start making decisions very actively. When you do that, it will definitely feel unnatural since your bad behaviour has become deep-seated in your personality and you have become accustomed to practicing it. Your brain won’t easily accept this change and will resist it from developing. However, you need to keep going if you really want to replace your bad habits with good habits. If you stick to it and accept it as a part of yourself, your mind will soon embrace it without resistance.

For instance, if you have to exercise to become fit but laziness has become engrained in your personality, then you won’t feel good and right when you decide to workout. But if you don’t allow your emotions to be a determining factor as to whether to exercise or not, it will be easy for you to build a habit of exercising regularly and ultimately achieve your goal. One way of keeping yourself going is to chant a mantra to motivate yourself.

Dump Your Habit of Making Excuses

Next, you need to discard your unhealthy behaviour of making excuses for delaying a task. This has everything to do with procrastination. You cannot go far in your quest towards building your self-discipline if you constantly procrastinate. Probably, the reason why you've been struggling over the years to achieve your goals is that you make excuses for not starting (which amounts to procrastination).

Let me give you an example of the form that excuses take:

"I won't be able to go for a jog because my jogging partner will not be coming"

"I won't go to the gym for 30 minutes today because I want to go for 1 hour next time"

Well, all these are excuses. However, if you want to transform yourself to a version that gives no excuses, you will need to be very honest with yourself to determine the real reason why you don't want to do something that needs to be done to achieve your goal.

For example, if you come up with the excuse "I won't go out for a jog now because it's too cold outside", then you need to be honest with yourself and state the real reason of not jogging. Instead tell yourself, "I am not going jogging because I am extremely lazy and lack the will to do something healthy". Ouch! Did that sting? Of course, it did. That's what honesty does. It pinches you and makes you realize your wrongs.

No one wants to admit that they are lazy. This is precisely why this realization will push you out of your self-defined comfort zone of laziness to prove to yourself that you are actually not guilty of this. With time, it will be easy to transform your life when you stop giving excuses for your inability to take action.

Chapter 5: Self-Discipline as a Success Mindset

Do you understand the connection between what you think and the success you experience or do not experience in your job or career? If you could learn to discipline your thoughts towards an attitude of success, do you believe it is possible you could, in turn, become successful?

There is a well-known phrase that talks about the importance of working smarter, and while there are many interpretations of what it can mean, overall, it is meant to emphasize the benefits of being focused, disciplined, and working hard. Hard work is the backbone of any career but over time, and when routine work habits are established and set in, the effort that a person exerts may become conditionally based. It could be due to a person's perception of a "bad" boss, poor working conditions, not receiving a pay increase or recognition for their effort, and the list continues. While there may certainly be merit to these feelings, it serves no real purpose to make working hard a conditional characteristic of your job performance.

If you care about your career development, then working hard needs to be a top priority every day. However, hard work may seem unjustified if a person's expectations are not being met and that is where self-discipline comes into play. It is a matter of always being in control of your performance and responsible for the quality of your work. It also involves making a commitment to yourself and your career, one that is not dependent upon circumstances or influenced by circumstance, no matter how challenging it may seem at the time. This will allow you to become disciplined and know that your best performance depends upon consistent effort, which establishes a mindset of career success.

Why Self-Discipline Matters

The development of a disciplined mindset allows you and your job performance to shine; whereas, the lack of intentional discipline sets you up for failure. Self-discipline is based upon a logical and rational perspective, it’s focused on being in control, and prompts the use of productive work habits. It is proactive with regards to job duties and career development, and it requires concentrated effort rather than striving to achieve absolute perfection.

Without self-discipline, a person is more likely to be impulsive and unfocused, act based upon emotional responses, and be reactive to circumstances. It is easy to begin to work on becoming self-disciplined, whether or not it is a habit now, if you start by establishing an intention and make it a goal to perform your best at all times. It does not require prolonged struggle, only career goals. You can make choices based upon what is best for your job and/or career. Self-discipline involves maintaining control over your attitude, mindset, emotions, and thoughts at all times.

Discipline and Doing Your Best

Your job has a specific description, or at least an expectation, of what it is you are supposed to accomplish. Over time, and as you become familiar with the daily tasks, you can determine what the minimum amount of effort is needed to complete the required duties and that may be enough for you to feel good when the workday ends. Then there are circumstances that influence the amount of effort you put in. There may be too much work, an upcoming deadline, or person in authority who is pressuring you to take on more work. You may willingly or grudgingly do more as requested; however, when you stop to consider this job, do you realize it is your career at stake?

The attitude you develop about your job will also influence the attitude you have about your career development and progress. If your job performance involves putting in the minimal effort, it is usually accompanied by feelings of job dissatisfaction, and that may create a negative mindset about your career. It means you view your effort from the perspective of what you get from the job rather than what you can gain from it in the long term. When you are disciplined, you maintain behaviors and an attitude that bolsters your daily productivity, which also provides you with the confidence needed to excel even when circumstances are less than perfect.

Learn to Develop Purposeful Intent

How do you feel good about a job and maintain that attitude, even when circumstances cause you to dislike it? You cannot force yourself to feel positive emotions when there are events or people who prompt negativity or feelings of frustration. What you can do is to change your perspective, and

that is where self-discipline matters. You can decide that you are going to feel good about yourself as a professional or as an employee despite the current conditions, and anchor it to a position statement that is focused on your career goals. This allows you to create a disciplined mindset with purposeful intent and focus.

Your career is a series of steps and progress will occur over time, and for some, it will be accomplished through more than one position or job. At the heart of this is you as a person, and it is you who has an ability to learn and grow. With purposeful intent, you can view each job as a stepping stone, which provides skills, knowledge, and direction. If one job does not meet your expectations or provides difficult conditions to work in, itemize what you have gained from it, list this information on your resume, and decide upon your next step. But no matter what, always make certain you have a disciplined focus or you will venture off-course in your job and career plans.

Consider How an Employer Views Your Disposition

Consider for a moment that you are a hiring manager. What is the type of candidate you would consider hiring if you were looking at more than the job description? Is it someone whose tone displays obvious frustration and does not seem to have much to say that is positive about their current employer or existing job? That is not a likely candidate for an employer based upon their attitude alone.

Now, consider a candidate who comes along and has a professional presence, demonstrates a clear understanding of their career path or goals, and can articulate what they have gained from each of the jobs they've held throughout their career. That is a candidate who will likely gain your interest, even if they are not considered for the position, because they have demonstrated a disciplined mindset.

The point of reviewing these scenarios is to show the contrast between someone who possesses an underlying feeling of career helplessness or career control, which also demonstrates the difference between a disciplined and undisciplined mindset. If would like to be the candidate

who is likely to get hired, establish a goal to be highly disciplined and productive.

Your disposition will carry over into the tone you convey when you speak with potential employers, along with your overall attitude about career development. As a professional resume writer, I can spot a person's disposition through their choice of words and how they describe their jobs when I talk to them. Someone who is disciplined and views all jobs as a learning experience has self-confidence about who they are and the talents they possess, regardless of job conditions or circumstances.

How to Develop Self-Discipline and Focus

Career Planning:you can begin to develop a hard-working, self-disciplined mindset right now by first examining your career plans. If you cannot articulate the specifics of your career, now is the time to get started. At the very least, decide upon a short-term and a long-term career goal. This will give you a sense of direction, one that can help you find what can be learned instead of focusing on existing working conditions.

The purpose of developing a career plan is to provide you with an ability to create purposeful intent. When you walk into the workplace each day, you can remind yourself you are able to learn from any situation, even if what you learn is that you are no longer growing or moving forward in your career.

Learning and Growth: an important component of a disciplined mindset is maximizing your learning and growth potential. If you have developed a productive working relationship with your supervisor or manager, ask them if there is more that you can do. For example, perhaps you can take on an extra project that is based upon a departmental or business need. To some people, this may seem to be counter-intuitive and an attempt to become the "teacher's pet" or some other type of negative phrasing.

If you are asking from a perspective of having a genuine interest and seeking professional development, and the need is recognized, this will create a feeling of accomplishment within you. As you continue to work hard, you may even extend the timeline that you work for this particular

employer. You will also likely be viewed as valuable employee, although the ability to remain disciplined will matter most in the long term for your career.

Self-Discipline as a Success Mindset

Becoming disciplined can have a variety of descriptions, including working hard, attaining maximum productivity, or maintaining a focus on what must be accomplished every day. The most meaningful correlation between a focused mindset and effort is the development of peak performance. This working definition speaks to the heart of what working to the very best of your abilities should mean. It is striving to maximize your performance with your current skills and abilities while being open to learning and development and putting in more than the minimum effort required.

There are going to be times when you aren't at the top of your game and that is certainly understandable. There will be some days that you find yourself working to the very best of your abilities and other days that find you putting in the best effort possible. The importance of being disciplined means that you do not allow job conditions be the reason why you are not functioning at peak productivity, whether there are new policies to adapt to, additional demands made of your job, or other circumstances.

You can always be in control of your actions and strive for peak performance as a matter of your career development. Learn to develop self-discipline as a mindset and attitude about how you work every day and watch your career continue to evolve as this sense of self is reflected in the outcomes you experience, both personally and professionally. The most effective way to be in control of your career and establish a pattern of success is to control how you think and how you work. Self-discipline is a productive state of mind and focused attitude that you can implement starting now. When your attitude is honed on performing your best, you will find yourself mentally resistant to adverse conditions and ready for new career opportunities. You are mentally disciplined, and both you and your career are transformed.

Finding Focus: Self-Discipline vs. Passion

Few skills are as important as the ability to focus. Like a magnifying glass to the sun, focus is the mechanism by which it becomes possible to concentrate the diffuse sunshine of thought into a sharp pointed laser-beam. When your laser is on target, you're able to burn your way to success far more efficiently and effectively than you otherwise could.

There are two primary channels through which to gather focus:

i) Self-discipline

ii) Passion

Self-discipline is a skill. As with any skill, it can be improved through training and practice. With sufficient coaching or training, it's possible to become far more self-disciplined and, as a result, focused. At the same time, there's an upper-limit to the amount of self-discipline you can develop. This upper-limit is set by your natural ability to be self-disciplined. Those with a natural propensity for self-discipline are generally able to put their heads down and plow through whatever it is that needs to get done, regardless of whether they like it or not. Since focusing on your talent is inherently satisfying, for the naturally self-disciplined the accomplishment that flows from the effort becomes its own reward.

With the less disciplined, the circumstances of the job are much more important for their ability to focus. The less disciplined will derive little to no satisfaction from applying themselves to what "has" to get done. Rather, to find their focus, the less disciplined must turn to what they "want" or "need" to get things done. This requires that they tap into their passions. Unlike self-discipline, passion is neither a talent nor a skill – it's an emotion. Like any emotion, it can't be harnessed by force, logic or reason. As Blaise Pascal said, "the heart has its reasons which reason knows not of."

So, the key for the less disciplined is to find what speaks to their hearts, and there are two key ways to do this. First, you can make sure that you employ your own natural talents on the job. Just as the naturally self-disciplined can derive satisfaction from work that allows them to draw on their gift, so too can the undisciplined find joy in work that allows them to focus on their

gifts – whatever those may be. The key here is to make sure that there is a fit between the talent and the requirements of the job.

The second way to tap into your passion is by appealing to your values. The root of the word "motivation" is "motive," and people are most motivated by the things that matter to them most. If you're not naturally self-disciplined, and you're in the unenviable position of having a job that does not employ your natural talents, the only ways for you to gain focus are either through a lot of hard coaching or training, or by aligning your work with your values. Otherwise, you will forever be unmotivated, unfocused, and ultimately, ineffective at what you do.

The ideal, of course, is to align your work both with your natural talents and your values. When you're able to do that, then it doesn't really matter whether you derive your focus from self-discipline or passion. The end result will be the same: laser-beam focus and a high level of effectiveness in all you do.

Self Discipline And Motivation - How To Increase Your Motivation Via Self Discipline

There are many times in life that we often take the way of least resistance. In the long-term, not having the self-discipline to do what needs doing or to not do what is destructive leads us into a less fulfilled life. I have seven steps which will help with developing the self-discipline; we end up needing to live our best possible existence. They are as follows:

1. Understand thyself: one of the first things we should do when we are seeking to develop self-discipline is to judge ourselves objectively. Often, when we judge others, we check out their actions and when we judge ourselves, we look at our intentions. To develop self-discipline, we should instead test our actions and outcomes.

2. Find accountability: in the process of developing self-discipline, people need to learn a well-kept secret; we typically can't trust ourselves. Accountability must start before action. It needs to begin with understanding your values and the boundaries in your own life that are not negotiable and what you aren't willing to compromise.

3. Always be patient: very few things which are worthwhile in life come to us instantly. Self-discipline is an incredibly hard and often a time-consuming habit to produce.

4. Look at your reflection objectively: we often overestimate as well as underestimate our abilities. We ought to see ourselves realistically.

5. Believe in long-term effects: if you want to have self-discipline in your own life, then you need to start thinking in a very long-term perspective. What you do or don't do today will have an effect on your future in some way.

6. Write out your goals: it is important to put what you would like to carry out in writing. Keep your goals available and review them every day. For example, if the self-discipline that you will be focusing on is living a healthy life and you know you should lose 30 pounds. Write the real goal out, break it into an achievable and track-able goal 1.5 to 2 pounds per week. Then you need to put a time frame on it and then break down the steps you'll use to do it.

7. Never surrender: one of the most essential things to remember is that when you never give up and never give in, then you can certainly never truly fail.

Chapter 6: Monday - Fear of Failure

Who among us is not afraid of failure? I guess we all are. In fact, it is a common psychological phenomenon, with supporting studies showing that the fear of failure is the top reason that prevents us from achieving success. We fail to recognize that these fears root from a self-destructive misunderstanding.

Some people mistakenly view failures as an evaluation of their worth. The emotions which stemmed from previous mistakes remained in their subconscious, resulting in being afraid of trying again.

You should always worry about things one step at a time. If you do not even begin to try, then there is no point in worrying about failure because the situation is purely hypothetical and will never come.

It is undisputed that all of us can sometimes fail even though we have completed our tasks effectively. This does not mean to say that we are failures. You can fail many times at your job, but it does not mean you also fail as a person. This kind of false belief about failure sticks to our brain and prevents us from developing and exercising self-discipline in our lives.

First Exercise: Exploring Fear of Failure

Here, you are going to explore three past situations where you have experienced failures or unwanted behaviour. In this exercise, you might be tempted to choose the most recent experiences as you might still feel uneasy about them, but try to refrain. Concentrate by remembering your juvenile years. In this way, you will have a better idea of how, when, and where your fear of failures initially began. As the saying goes, “your past affects your present.” By jotting down your worst experiences, you will be able to figure out where your fear originated from and enable you to fix the root of the problem.

Note: Be true to yourself. Spend ten minutes doing this exercise, even if it may be a bit painful to recount. Don’t forget to write down all your physical and emotional reactions as well since these will be helpful to gain insight later on.

Chapter 7: Tuesday - Fear of Success

Success can be daunting because it comes with added responsibilities. Achieving success is one thing but maintaining it is another – success is something which is ongoing and can be built on. The additional effort required can be undesirable to some people and can overpower the positive aspects that success brings. When this happens, self-discipline will waver as there is a lack of full commitment.

Not being aware of our hidden fear to succeed can make us weak and ineffective. It is like having an antagonist in our life who interferes with everything to pull us down.

We need to learn and understand the mantra that we embed in ourselves in order to align it with the requirements of self-discipline.

Second Exercise: Exploring Fear of Success

On a piece of paper, reminisce about three previous successful experiences that likewise created a problem for you. As you expound on your experiences, accentuate the factors that made you successful. Concentrate by remembering your juvenile years again. Be particular. Specify them. This will give you mindfulness about how, when, and where your fear of success began.

Chapter 8: Wednesday - Fear of Rejection

No one likes to be rejected and an anticipation of this largely creates a negative impact on our lives. As human beings, we crave to be recognized by our family, friends, co-workers and the community. Not achieving this makes us feel disappointed and not acknowledged, and the lack of acknowledgment in itself is a form of rejection which isn't a pleasant feeling. Rejection is also seen as the product of failure so this goes hand in hand with the above fear.

This is the reason why we constantly question ourselves, our decisions and our strategies. We become hesitant to make full use of our internal resources.

Third Exercise: Exploring Fear of Rejection

Write down three things that you have always wanted to do but never gotten around to doing for fear of being rejected. While focusing on this, bear in mind that these things have never come into fruition because you have either lacked the self-discipline or have been inhibited by your negative emotions. Say to yourself that you only have one life to live and no one can

make your dreams come true if you don’t do anything about them. Take one step at a time and be proactive. If you do not even begin to take the first step, there is no point to anticipate the result because there won’t be one, be it positive or negative.

Chapter 9: Thursday - Fear of Unevenness

How many times have you looked beyond your perfectionism to see what is behind?

Perfectionism results in the fear of unevenness and can stem from an obsessive compulsive disorder. You will never be satisfied with neutral accomplishments and this can lead to an enormous pressure. This can appear to be overwhelming and eventually leads to you procrastinating, believing that avoidance is the least tedious route. This negative outlook prevents us from taking the leap of faith by making use of the limited windows of opportunity that may present themselves.

Fourth Exercise: Exploring Fear of Unevenness

To counter the negative effects of perfectionism, you must first expel the extreme thinking that everything has to be either black or white. List a couple of instances where there have been BOTH positive and negative outcomes – and how each situation has made you feel. You will find upon your own personal discovery that sub-optimal conditions can still lead to happiness, and that the secret is in how you frame your mind.

Chapter 10: Friday - Fear of Risks

Most people like doing things that they are used to as human beings are one of routine. We tend to live in the comfort of our bubble because it feels safe and familiar. When we perceive risks as a threat to this, we start to miss out on growth opportunities. This can also lead to a dissatisfaction of a stagnant life which breeds unhappiness.

Doubt is also a part of the whole vicious cycle: once doubt arises, your willpower fails to remind you to believe in yourself by supporting your own growth. We have to combat the different aspects of fear in order to start believing in ourselves and unleash our full potential. Similarly, self-discipline is not a unit in itself; it is made up of different psychological powers combined to a greater power, similar to a tornado composed of small winds to create a strong blow.

Self-discipline cannot exist without self-confidence. For example, a person will not begin to diet if she thinks she cannot commit to it; you will not start a business without believing you can achieve success. To commit to a cause, you must first believe in the desired outcome and in yourself.

Fifth Exercises: Exploring Fear of Risks

Write down a list of things which you have not done before and would like to do. Prioritize these activities or projects by rank and set timescales to complete them, with number 1 being the most important or desired. Tell yourself that if you do not adhere to these deadlines, you will never achieve true success and live your life the way you want to.

Chapter 11: Saturday - Accepting No Less Than Everything

"You can either win or lose."

"There is only one way to do it right."

"If you think you can, do it; if not, just leave it."

The statements listed above denote a conviction that signifies a self-destructive behaviour. All the studies about human behaviour show that life is not merely about winning or losing. Our life is lived mostly in the gray area between the two limits and neglecting this causes you to miss out on the truly great bits.

The predominant but illogical attitude of "Accepting No Less Than Everything" ties in with everything else we have discussed thus far. If you believe that there is no such thing as partial success, then it is time to realign your thinking. Setting milestones is the first step to achieving your goals: reaching each milestone is a small victory and takes you one step closer to your end goal. A good analogy to think of this is by imagining the following scenario: When you play a game, you save at certain checkpoints as you move closer to clearing the stage. If you use milestones, you won't feel that "sudden death" is implemented (all or nothing – failure leading to the end of the campaign) and this leads to a greater sense of security and accomplishment.

Exercise Six: Visualizing

Visualizing is one of the known self-discipline tools and the greatest part of visualising is that you are already doing it. You are doing it whenever you reminisce, whenever you think about the present and whenever you dream about the future. Consciously, you are using it more than fifty times a day.

In order to create mental images, you need to construct vivid ideas involving your senses. For example, your goal is to get up two hours earlier than the usual in order to do sports. Start visualizing yourself every day within a week or two before the actual change. Hear your phone alarm. Visualize yourself stretching and getting out of bed. Feel the breeze as you hop into the shower. Lastly, imagine yourself doing the actual exercise.

When visualizing, it is important to pay attention to detail and to repeat the process over and over again in order to engrain it into your mind. A few seconds of visualization can already be effective; doing it for more for thirty minutes is even better.

Chapter 12: Sunday - "I Must" Attitude and Reward Systems

Being perfect, as we discovered during our research on the fear of unevenness, is considered one of the worst anxiety triggers. The

consequences include deferment, uncertainty, broken relationships, heavy drinking, drug abuse, etc. Some people are in constant struggle with self-defeat.

"I have to gain victory in this competition."

"I have to do this task flawlessly."

"I have to be on top."

Keep in mind that the word "must" lies behind a perfectionist's soliloquy. Even if the word is not expressed, the implication is nonetheless present. Every time you feel you need to do something, you are effectively wearing blinkers that are narrowing your thoughts and vision.

A part of you recognizes that perfectionism is just an idyllic way to inspire you to find the better you. In fact, there is something stirring within you that wants to create concepts, ideas and objectives to make it a reality.

Your sense reminds you that even if you strive to do things perfectly, it would not be perfect. If you cling on to the concept of being perfect, it will be difficult for you to bear the emotional and psychological pain and self-loathing for not reaching your ideal standard.

As long as a part of you wants to achieve the way to be disciplined, your inner perfectionism will slowly clear out. Herein lies the challenge: to defeat that part of you that refuses self-discipline in order to avoid the impending anxiety associated with imperfection.

Exercise Seven: Rewards Systems

Do you currently use a sophisticated and efficient reward system to start and end your tasks? If not, you must create one. You will discover that a plain reward system is the key to self-motivation. This system will also lessen the struggle of not being disciplined when the time for action has come and when you encounter obstacles while reaching your goal.

<u>Personalized Reward Systems</u>

Private Praise

Each time you make a small step towards achieving your goal, lavish yourself with private praise. Congratulate immediately after every positive thought, sentiment, or deed along with the soliloquy of support.

"It feels good for completing this task."

"That's great! You finally did it!"

"Excellent going!"

The good thing about this method is that you can do it anytime and anywhere. As time goes by, these little supporting phrases will help you to do the things you should do and even those that you do not like. By congratulating yourself after a full stride, your self-esteem will be increased, which is the main ingredient to develop your self-discipline.

Contracts

Self-contracts are another tool that can reward you for each stride you take towards your goal. Here, you set a contract to yourself similar to what you do with someone else. When implementing a contract, you should always know your actions and the associated reward. To make it more helpful, determining specifics should be added to the agreement.

For example:

"For every task I complete on my checklist, I will treat myself to a delicious bowl of ice cream and enjoy 30 minutes of watching Netflix."

"For every 2 kilograms I lose, I will reward myself with a nice dress."

Chapter 13: Self-Discipline For Achieving Success

We already know that self discipline is important, but do we really need it?

We know about success tools, and we familiarize ourselves with many useful resources that lead us to success. So, why do we need self discipline?

We all have goals for many areas of our lives. Some of us want successful relationships, some like to get more money, others want simply happiness in their lives, and others seek better health with less weight. These are common goals, and we sometimes fail or succeed in achieving them. The general question is: Why we don't achieve those goals? Why we don't become successful in these goals?

The general answer is: lack of self discipline.

Success needs time. It does not happen at once. What you do today will determine the results in your future. If you change your present, you change your future. If you eat a lot of pizzas and delicious food today, you will gain weight, and this will show in your future weight. If you spend more money than what you earn today, you will have less money in the future.

Present steps determine future results.

Self-discipline takes place in your present which will lead to your future.

You can learn many tips and tools for your goals, but unless you take action for these goals, you will never become successful in reaching them. Almost all goals need efforts and continuity. Self discipline will enable you to get required efforts and continuity. If you need to lose weight, you need self discipline – among other skills – to eat less. If you want to make more money, you have to discipline yourself either for more savings or for more investing. Self discipline takes time, and so does success.

It is about making some sacrifices. Yes, sometimes it means making some hard sacrifices. Why do we need to sacrifice for anything? Why not just enjoy the moment of time and do what we “love” to do?

Of course, no one will force you to do anything you don't really want to do. However, we sacrifice because we all have values and important goals in our lives, and these values require us to make a choice: either pleasure or that goal. The two cannot be achieved in the same time, in most cases.

Our lives are full of temptations: we have TVs, good food, chocolates, video games... etc. These temptations makes it harder for us to resist having more fun and thus, we neglect the more important goals in our lives. Almost all of us want to have a slim figure, but with these temptations around us almost all of the time, we lose that goal of a slim figure. Almost all of us want to make more money, but it is not easy to resist, for example, discounted travel packages. In these cases, we really need self discipline. It will allow us to focus on our goals and pursue them until we reach success. With self discipline, we can exercise better control on our instant wishes.

It is the difference between what you feel and what you think.

It is the borderline between your heart and your brain.

You may want to eat that pizza which was shown on a TV commercial, but your self discipline stops you because you have a goal of weight control, and in this process, it allows you to succeed in that goal.

It is an amazing resource for success. Actually, many experts believe that it is impossible to reach success without it. According to Lou Holtz, "Without self-discipline, success is impossible, period." Research shows that entrepreneurs must have it in order to succeed in business. According Jerry Osteryoung, who had worked with 3000 leaders, he noticed that what is common among the successful ones among them is not their education or intelligence or training, but it is their high self discipline. For students, studies show that high school performance is linked to high self discipline rather than to high IQ level. I had met a 21-year-old student who finished high school with straight A's. He went to medical school only for one year and dropped out. He did not complete his study. He also refused any coaching or advice. His IQ level was extraordinarily high at 154. Certainly, with his high intelligence, he did not need any coaching for how to study. But he definitely needed coaching for why to study. He simply did not want

to study, and he did not complete his studies in spite of his intelligence. He lacked any self discipline for study.

It is a habit found in successful people, and it is a mental habit.

Successful persons were programmed mentally for self-discipline. They use it naturally and automatically. This way, it is not a hard effort for them to do and use it regularly.

We know that success has a trend and common laws. We also know that successful persons became successful just by following these laws. Many experts studied successful people for many years and wrote many rich and useful books about them. One top expert in this field, Brian Tracy, claims that one main skill that you need to achieve success is the resource of self discipline. You may know many laws of success, and you may have a map for your goals, but this map will not work if you do not exercise self-control for your goals. It is a fact that 97% of people do not write their goals, and this by itself is a major obstacle to success. But simply writing the goals is not enough unless it is combined with self discipline. It is your practical map for success. It is your actual pragmatic steps that lead you to translating your goals into success.

Successful persons have high self discipline, and they use it without experiencing hardship. They view it, not as a hard sacrifice or boring tasks to do, but rather as a type of freedom – freedom from dependence on others, freedom from procrastinations, and freedom from self-limitations.

We need it for all areas of our lives. It is connected with time management skills. With it, you can better organize your time. It can lead to self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-satisfaction. You will need it also for developing spiritual growth, self growth, and meditation. It is one major resource to reach what you are capable of – your potential.

Some people were born with high self-discipline. However, the majority of people do not have it, and it is possible for them to learn it. This learning can be in two forms: by conscious tools (which means by daily exercises for some time, for a month or so) or by unconscious tools such as hypnosis, which is more effective and longer lasting. In either method, the person can

acquire self discipline and will be able to complete his required tasks as necessary.

Willpower and Self Discipline in Your Online Business

In your online business, there are quite a number of things that you have to master in order to be successful, but few can compare in importance to will-power and self-discipline. You are going to be tested in so many ways, while building your business that you are going to need these two qualities so important in your life almost every day. It is no good carrying on procrastinating and taking no action about different things that we all know are absolutely necessary in your online business.

So often, you may want to do things that you know are beneficial and important for your business online yet, if you do not actually take action to get them done, you see that time carries on regardless and very little is achieved. This sort of thing happens to most of us, especially when we lack will power and have no self-discipline. So, keep reading because I will cover a few ways to develop will power and acquire self-discipline.

I don't want you to keep wishing you had will-power and self-discipline. Instead, I am going to show how to get these qualities to make a great difference in your life. When you start eliminating the habits that stop you from going forward – like laziness, excessive eating, smoking and procrastination – you will be on your way to recognize that you are getting more will power and self-discipline. Having more of these qualities is absolutely necessary to do well in your online business.

But how do you get will-power? How do you begin to understand will-power? Well, if you think, like many people do, that will-power is something very arduous or difficult or that you have to tense your body and brain to express it, you are mistaken. Don't believe it because I am going to show some strategies that will convince you it is not difficult to develop will-power.

When you don't value insignificant, unnecessary and unhealthy ideas, feelings, actions, and reactions that don't empower you, you are showing

you posses will-power. This energy is stored inside you and can be available any time you need it to accomplish anything you want.

We will cover later some exercises you can do to gain a lot of will power. But now let us talk about self-discipline and why you need it for your life and your business. You could say that when you make decisions for your business and carry them through to fruition, you have some self-discipline because you have not allowed instant gratification and pleasure to take you away from your desired course. Indeed, that is a good definition of self-discipline because your actions allowed you to stay with the course that you selected beforehand.

Is this skill useful and required in everyone's life? Absolutely! Without it, as we discussed before, you would not stick with your decisions and would have a hard time achieving your goals in business. When you have it, your actions, thoughts and behaviour are in line with a better and more fulfilling life because your inner strength and will power overcome addictions and other negative traits like procrastination, laziness and lack of focus. This will allow you to achieve whatever you want to do in online business.

So, why would you not develop self-discipline? You do know how useful and required it is for success in your personal life and, of course, in the business world too; so, fortify it, embrace it and develop it further. Remember that lack of discipline may lead you to failure in reaching your goals. But on the other hand, actions described above that demonstrate you have self-discipline leads to self-assurance, inner strength and self-regard, as well as to complete satisfaction and happiness.

There are lots of issues and challenges along the path of success, accomplishment and wealth in business, and you want to rise above all of them to become successful in whatever you do. You want and need to have perseverance, persistence, and sheer will power in order to also overcome other negative traits like smoking, drinking, eating disorders and other damaging habits like drug addition, procrastination, and laziness.

Here is what self-discipline can do for you, in addition to those qualities mentioned above:

✓ It allows you to regulate and control anger, indecision, appetite and various other natural responses.

✓ You can eliminate many types of temptations which you do not need like gossiping or gambling, overeating or watching too much television.

✓ It can certainly rescue you from throwing in the towel when things are tough in the business world or in your personal life, by giving you the strength to keep going.

✓ With it, you can get great relationships with others, by not feeling easily hurt or disturbed with what people sometimes do or say to you.

✓ It gives you better control over the need to accomplish the goals you set for yourself in your online business, as well as having total control over your responses, needs, and thoughts.

There are so many more qualities that self-discipline can bring to you, but how can you develop these inner qualities of will-power and self-discipline? Well, will-power can be obtained gradually and it all depends really on your desire to get it.

Also, you do not require huge monumental feats of effort to achieve it. Don't believe those who tell you that to get will-power require you to go through great suffering or physical mutilation.

In fact, anyone can become powerful with will-power, simply by the challenge of eliminating everything that you know is harmful for you in many areas of your personal and business life. By giving up adverse and useless things that take up your time and make you weak, you gain in strength according to how many of these bad habits you can stop. Repeating this process is the challenge you need to make your life more absorbing, gratifying and interesting.

The will-power that you want is not something that can be achieved in one day. You can only developed it bit by bit, over a period of time, and it is something that doesn't depend on feelings, emotions, un-focus enthusiasm

or even optimism. Instead, this gradual ability developed over a period of time, if it turns into a habit, is something so special that you can use over and over again whenever and wherever you require it.

This training of the will-power extends or inter-relates with self-discipline since the taking of gradual steps to obtain will-power requires another great quality, as we've covered before, called self-discipline. So, carry on this way because with self-discipline you also get self-control which is synonymous to self-discipline.

Using self-control wisely is one of the most important tools you can have for self-improvement and for accomplishing success online.

What else does self-control do? It can do a lot of things like keeping under control any self-destructive, addictive, compulsive and obsessive action. It can enhance the sense of personal mastery and balance over your life. It can also remove any feelings of weakness and being too dependent on other people. It also enables you to take control over your life. There are many other qualities that self-control brings to your life.

Self-control also has to act against many obstacles like truly understanding what self-control really is about; or about deficiencies of the desire to alter and improve. It has to act against solid and uncontrolled emotional responses. Also, do not allow self-control to be considered a restricting and unpleasant activity.

How do you develop self-control? You first find out what areas of your life need more self-control such as drinking, betting, smoking, obsessive behaviour, and eating. Then attempt to identify emotions that lack control, like being angry, dissatisfied, sadness, resentment, delight, or fearfulness. See if you can isolate the thoughts and emotions that push you to act in an unrestrained manner.

Here are a few exercises that you can do to gain will-power, self-discipline and self- control:

A) Refrain from saying things that are offensive or negative to other groups of people.

B) Overlook the gossip useless in pages of newspapers.

C) When you desire to eat unhealthy meals, discard the thought and prepare yourself an alternative healthy one.

D) Try not to drink your tea with sugar for a week if you normally take sugar with your tea.

E) Get up straight away at the set time to do it, instead of thinking about it.

F) Develop the habit of finishing what you started.

But there are so many more things similar to those above to create an unstoppable muscle to develop your inner strength. The point here is that you do not want to continue making your life hard by doing the things you don't like. Consider instead making your life “easy” by doing the things that most people think hard to do. These skills are vital for your will-power, self-discipline, your personal life, and your online business.

Chapter 14: 80 Percent Of Self-Discipline Is Saying No

Saying no is one of the most important things to learn when developing your self-discipline. One of the problems with getting and maintaining self-discipline is that we are "too easy" on ourselves and let laziness take over our lives rather than saying "no" to the things that suck up our time or get us sidetracked from our goals.

We can avoid laziness in two ways: by saying no to the things that tempt us, and also by saying no to alternatives or options which may present themselves as a shortcut.

The Plight of the Infovore

Many things out there are designed specifically to suck up all of our free time even though some of these things are actually pretty useful! Take the

internet, as an example. This happens to be one of my weaknesses. It's something I have been struggling with for some years.

Browsing the web can be very valuable when you're doing research, as I most often solve some kind of problem or discover information about a particular topic. But it can also easily become a huge waste of time.

The problem begins when that innocent, purposeful research becomes the POINT of my web browsing, often without me even realizing it! No longer am I trying to come up with a way to solve some kind of problem, but rather the browsing itself insidiously takes the place of my previous goal.

Sometimes I'm aware of when this happens, and sometimes I'm not. While I'm in the moment and browsing through sites to find the information I seek, it typically feels like I'm getting real work done. It feels like I'm making progress and that I've gathered a lot of great data.

But then, when I really look at the ratio of good information gleaned from the web versus the amount of time spent to get there, I'm appalled. I can easily sink hours into a simple web search.

If it took me 3 hours to get one or two useful ideas, is that really a good return on the investment of my time? Sometimes, but often not.

There are many indulgences we allow in our lives without really examining how they're affecting our lives and what we're sacrificing when we do these things. It varies from person to person, and could be anything from video games to shopping to watching TV.

If your goal is to build self-discipline, you have to begin to learn how to say no to the indulgences you had previously come to expect. "Well, of course I'm going to watch the basketball game tonight. That's what I do every night, even though there's some work that needs to be done. I can't miss the game..." Stop.

To learn self-discipline, it necessarily means you must learn to say no to these desires or impulses to engage in certain hobbies, some of which might

be just consuming too much of your time, or other things that cause you physical or mental harm.

Snack Attack

How often do you snack? I know I do it a lot, and many times it is mindless snacking.

The other night I got up out of my chair and wandered over to the cupboard to check out what's in there...but I have been trying to go low-carb for some time now. The only thing housed in the cupboard are carbs – tricky carbs.

Of course, what did I spy other than an undiscovered, unopened bag of my favorite kind of chips? So, what did I do? Maybe you guessed it. I said no.

I wanted those chips bad. Real bad. It's been a while since I had chips, and I really wanted them badly. I was fiending for chips like an addict. Perhaps literally like an addict.

But the "no" cut through it. I told myself that eating a few chips wasn't worth getting back in a bad habit which I've worked so hard to avoid. I was successful there, and so far I still am.

One of the themes of this blog is that small changes can lead to big ones. So by rejecting the chips, in a small way I built up my willpower. If I can say no to those chips this evening, I improve the likelihood that I'll say no to them tomorrow evening.

My willpower grows stronger, and I'm capable of resisting other things which I might also desire. Inch by inch I move closer to my goals.

It's not easy to tell yourself no, and to turn your back on the things that once gave you pleasure. But in a certain sense, it's oddly kind of pleasurable to do just that!

It's pleasurable to tell yourself no, and then to actually follow through on that directive. You see, when you don't have a lot of self-discipline and you

train yourself to have just a tiny bit of it, that success feels good. Building on that success also feels good.

With Friends Like These...

There's another dimension to the "no" game. You have to learn how to say no to the people around you, too. Some people will, knowingly or unknowingly, attempt to sabotage your goals.

If you're trying to quit smoking, there will be friends who offer you a smoke out of habit. Or if you're trying to lose weight, they'll ask you to you have a type of food that you've sworn off (a coworker just offered me cookies today, argh). Sometimes, these people insist or even become a little offended when you tell them no. Maybe they mistake your rejection of their offer as a rejection of them as a person. But I digress...try to anticipate these kinds of scenarios beforehand by using a technique called a precommitment.

Imagine that your spouse, friend, or coworker will innocently ask you to do something that would thwart one of your goals. In doing so, you prepare yourself ahead of time for that event. If you practice saying no to that person in your mind, you can be better prepared to say no to them in real life.

This works with yourself too! If you know that you're going to encounter delicious ice cream in the freezer or that seductive web browser, prepare ahead of time for how you'll respond in a more disciplined, self-controlled manner. In learning to say no to the things we most want, we grow the skill of self-discipline.

You might argue that doing these things will deprive you. Well, I agree. No one promised that self-discipline was going to be easy or enjoyable. It can be kind of a drag sometimes.

But on the other hand, you want more out of life. Presumably, your goals are more important than that minor discomfort you experience every time you resist a scoop of ice cream or a drag from a cigarette.

Chapter 15: Using Insecurity To Build Self-Discipline

Dictionary.com defines insecurity as a "lack of confidence or assurance; self-doubt." Some synonyms include instability, precariousness, shakiness and vulnerability. Insecurity is the feeling that you lack control and confidence in your outlook and position in life. You have a weak and shaky foundation in which you operate, and anyone can cause emotional and psychological disruption. On some level, we all wrestle with insecurity. Just think of a time when you felt good about completing a project. You spent hours tweaking and perfecting it. In your imagination, you envisioned people marveling at your creativity. Then you showed your crown jewel to a loved one or co-worker. With a look of disapproval and confusion, they sheepishly said," Oh, that's nice." At that moment, all you wanted to do was crawl under a rock. You vowed never to create anything ever again. Guess what? You didn't. These moments, where insecurity got the best of you, can be proportional to the degree that you exercise self-discipline. After all, if no one cares about trying new things, why should you? It is painful to be ridiculed by friends, loved ones and strangers.

By thinking in these terms, you are actually being rational. Who wants to be ridiculed for being creative and taking chances? However, what is the personal cost for happiness over a lifetime when you are driven by your insecurities? Also, what impact does self-discipline have over insecurities?

The road that most people take is to allow insecurity to impact their lives negatively. By being progressively selfish, you may not develop greater self-discipline, but also are incapable of building a life of happiness. Progressive selfishness is the notion that you act predominately in your self-interest as a mode of behavior and as a means of achieving goals that benefit you and society. Conversely, regressive selfishness is the notion that for you to win someone has to lose. With regressive selfishness, the other person not only has to lose, but also must be humiliated and annihilated.

There are a few ways to use your insecurities to build your self-discipline to become happier and successful through progressive selfishness. Here are a

few ways to start the process:

Use your insecurities as a catalyst for success

Psychologists postulate that people are motivated more by the loss of something over its gain. Consequently, fear can be a motivator. Your fear of ridicule, shame, failure or solitude can actually move you to do phenomenal things. It has been suggested that President John F. Kennedy was viewed by his father and people who knew him as a youth as wayward and unfocused. His brother, Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., was seen as having the greatest promise among the Kennedy family. After Joseph was killed in World War II, John became the person anointed to position the family within politics. A great deal of Kennedy's motivation came from a desire to please his father (Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.) as well as prove to the world that he could make a contribution. Use and overcome your insecurities as a means of showing the world your true value. Although you may experience degrees of setback and failure, your self-confidence will grow as you develop the self-discipline to follow through on projects. The major difference between success and failure is the ability to keep plugging away at a problem until there is a breakthrough.

Begin with a general interest and whittle it down

For 60-plus years, experts in the field of motivation and peak performance have regaled the importance of passion. At its core, passion is the emotional energy that pushes action forward. If passion were part of a car, it would be the engine. Once you fuel passion with action, it moves you closer to your goals. However, as you are moving, you will find your concentration getting more specific. You might start with a passion for baking desserts, then your passion may whittle down to baking just cakes. Finally, only baking chocolate cakes. In this vein, as you develop self-discipline in your area of expertise, you start experimenting with different types of chocolate. Generally, the whittling down process leads you to the core of your motivation. The more specific you become, the more expertise you gain. This expertise builds confidence and acclaim.

Commit to the self-discipline process

Self-confidence is merely a record of successful achievements. Winners who have overcome life's obstacles have gained a self-assuredness derived from a string of successes. Action and follow through is the core to achieving influence and distinction. Whether it's weight loss, business development or educational plans, the ability to stay the course, learning and growing along the way, is the key to success and happiness. You must love the process from the passion you possess to stay motivated. Always do what's necessary when it should be done. Also, don't delegate or pass the responsibility on to someone else. Self-discipline is a skill. If you delegate your responsibilities to someone else, the other person will become the expert with great self-confidence. That is how someone willing to do the work that you will not steals your ideas.

Now you know the secret to turning your insecurities into success through self-discipline. You must create a mission to show the world your value, find a passion, whittle it down to its infinitesimal parts, and stay the course by sticking to the process. In the end, you will not only have developed self-discipline and self-confidence, you will have created a new life.

How To Achieve Healthy Weight Loss By Building Self-Discipline

Everybody loves a gimmick. Everybody loves a turnkey solution. Everybody likes automatic and simple and easy solution to even the most complicated of life's problems. Who wouldn't? After all, we are all modern creatures of comfort. We don't like to expend effort. We like to have our cake and eat it too, and eat it immediately. That's who we are; we are creatures of convenience. Unfortunately, we're not going to get anywhere in terms of weight loss if we focus on convenience, comfort, and expediency. If you want to lose weight and lose it on a sustained basis, meaning keep the weight off next year and 5 years, you need to focus on self-discipline. Self-discipline is a bad word nowadays because it's not convenient. It tells you that you can't have your cake and eat it too. It tells you that you can't even eat your cake now. Self-discipline is all about doing the hard and necessary things now so you can profit and benefit in the future. Everybody seems has a bad case of attention-deficit disorder and we'd rather have things now; people are just very impatient. But if you want to sustain your

weight loss, you need a healthy dose of self-discipline. Follow the tips below to build your self-discipline.

Building Self-Discipline First

When people set out to lost weight, they tend to be objective focused. This means that their main objective is to lose the weight. That's how they measure their success; that's how they frame the whole problem. It's how many pounds do you weigh at the end of the process, compared to the amount of weight you had at the beginning of the process. If you go about your weight loss regimen like this, you're just setting yourself up for disappointment and heartbreak. The truth is if you want to truly lose weight and lose it on a sustain basis, you need to focus on building your self-discipline first. This means that you have to look at discipline as a reward at the end of itself. It's not a means to an end. It is not a process. Discipline itself is the goal. You have to change your mind about how weight loss works and what your weight loss success metrics are. Instead, focus on “I'm trying to lose weight because I'm trying to become more disciplined.” When you make discipline your goal, you increase the chance of achieving sustainable weight loss.

Eating Less

When you decide to eat less, the rubber meets the road when it comes to discipline building. This is when you physically and palpably have to exercise discipline because you're not going to eat as much as you normally would. Stuff that taste great, you have to replace them with stuff that you've always hated. If you've always loved Krispy Kreme doughnuts, you're going to have to replace them with apples. So, this is the first step of losing weight through self-discipline. The great thing about this whole process is that you're losing weight in a completely natural way. You're not using chemical boosters or you're not using chemical compounds that impact your brain chemistry, you're doing everything naturally.

Exercising More

Next to eating less, exercising more can be an ordeal for most people that are trying to lose weight. The fact that they are overweight is a testimony to

the fact that they don't get much exercise, so how do they psyche themselves up to exercise more. The great thing about a disciplined approach to exercising more is that you can do it incrementally. You don't have to eat the whole burrito so to speak from the get go. You can scale it up step by step. If you're trying to run to lose weight, try walking first. Walk around your house, then walk around your block, then start walking 5 miles a day, then eventually start jogging, and then you pick up the pace. The great thing about exercising more is that you can ramp it up. It is very scalable.

Chapter 16: The 4 Cornerstones

"The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination." – Tommy Lasorda

How would your life be different if you strengthened self-discipline? For some people, discipline sparks negativity, so I will use the term “self-determination” instead. Strengthening self-determination is one of the best things you can do to make great advancements in life and work. You gain freedom, confidence, and success. Self-determination leads to accomplishing more, perseverance, healthier choices, financial stability, a positive career/ business outlook, confidence to handle and achieve whatever comes your way, better control of time, and perceiving obstacles as only bumps in the road. Below are four cornerstones to bolster self-determination.

"People of mediocre ability sometimes achieve outstanding success because they don't know when to quit. Most men succeed because they are determined to." – George E. Allen

Determination – Determination is resolute. Firm decisions are made with the best possible outcome in mind. The objective is established often in contrast to emotions tied to instant gratification. There is no room for excuses. You are set in your purpose. This is where strategy becomes your structure, to hold you accountable to a systematic plan to reach your end result. Whether you are deciding on stopping at the donut shop next to the

gym, working an elaborate project, or growing a new business, determination is the first step. Pause and make the best choice with firm resolve, knowing your ultimate objective.

"The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settled for." – Maureen Dowd

Daily Discipline – This is the execution of your strategy. It is disciplining and training oneself to follow through on the best choice while refusing to give in to emotionally-based instant gratification. You carry out a regimen knowing the rewards are great. You strengthen your will to resist impulses that conflict with your best interests. When you fall down, you get back up, learn from it, and continue. With free will, we can alter our fate. Daily discipline provides the support system. Through this process, positive transition occurs.

"Every worthwhile accomplishment, big or little, has its stages of drudgery and triumph; a beginning, a struggle and a victory." – Gandhi

Discomfort – As a natural part of the growth process, discomfort permeates our being when resisting an impulse. It indicates growth and rewards are on their way. Similar to muscle soreness after a workout, discomfort signifies growing pains. As you continue saying “yes” to building skills, developing knowledge, healthier food choices, taking time for your most meaningful relationships, handling details of a project, exercising, etc., you become comfortable with discomfort.

"Winners take time to relish their work, knowing that scaling the mountain is what makes the view from the top so exhilarating." – Denis Waitley

Desserts – The final course; the rewards, is sweet. When you become resolute in your determination, consistently continue daily discipline, and forge through discomfort, you begin experiencing rewards. Some are slow to come but have long range, carrying you into the future with more stability. Others come while reflecting, acknowledging, and celebrating steps achieved and progress made. Do not skip these “feel good” moments by looking at what is yet to be done. Set milestones to relish the journey along the way.

In *The Mental ABCs of Pitching* , the author H.A. Dorfman shared that "self-discipline is a form of freedom. Freedom from laziness and lethargy, freedom from the expectations and demands of others, and freedom from weakness and fear-and doubt. Self-discipline allows a pitcher to feel his individuality, his inner strength, his talent. He is master of, rather than a slave to, his thoughts and emotions." You do not have to be a pitcher to apply this wise piece of advice. Do you currently choose to be a master or slave to your thoughts and emotions? Use the four cornerstones above to tap into the massive amount of strength you hold within and bolster self-determination...starting sow!

Be Unlimited Action Challenge

Choice A: choose one specific area to build self-determination.

- Begin with a smaller goal to build a record of accomplishment. Choose your objective and strategy with firm determination; no hoping. It is a decision, a commitment, with firm determination to succeed.

- Execute your strategy with daily discipline. Record in a journal each time you succeed in overcoming emotionally-based impulses by making the best choice for you. If you give into an impulse, learn from it. Jot down what was going on: were you tired, hungry, sad, stressed, etc. Excuses are not an option but we can learn from them in order to take better care of and strengthen ourselves.

- Decide what you will tell yourself about discomfort so that you continue to make the best choices.

- Acknowledge your progress and enjoy the rewards. Congratulations! Celebrate your achievement! Continue strengthening!

Choice B: practice building self-determination for a full month.

- Mark the last day of the month as a Celebration Day!

~ Make a note in your smart phone, a handy notebook, or whatever works best for you each time you encounter a moment of self-determination. Note

the date, the situation, how you felt before and after, and if you used self-determination or gave into impulses.

- Build a record of strengthening. Learn from moments of weakness.

- Each week, acknowledge your progress, growth, and any rewards.

- Do something special to enjoy your Celebration Day! Congratulations! Continue strengthening!

Chapter 17: Self-Discipline To Manage Money

Success in your financial life requires the exercise of optimal self-discipline. Too much self denial can result in frustration and failure; too little self-discipline can lead to ruin. Understanding the optimal level of self-restraint and control of one's finances can lead to consistent financial success and builds the foundation for a secure financial future.

The Need for Self-Discipline

To build financial security and success, you must learn to spend less than you earn. There is no secret to this and no easy way around it. This is an inescapable principle of building wealth. Every person who has ever become wealthy through their own efforts has learned this principle and practiced it religiously.

The business world will not impose this discipline on you. To the contrary, the business world will do all it can to encourage you to spend all you earn and more. It will make credit available to you as easily as imaginable so that you spend even more than you earn pushing you into poverty.

Only you can exercise the discipline necessary to keep your spending below your earning and thereby, build reserves and investment capital.

Danger of Too Much Self-Discipline

For most people, there is a tolerance level for this kind of self denial. At some point, people will rebel against self-imposed limitations and just "spend it" on something. It may be something they believe they really need, but more often, it is on something they really want.

People are naturally disinclined to postpone short term gratification for long term gratification. We live in the present. We want things now. If you deny yourself everything you could possibly buy and live in some form of self imposed poverty just to save money, you and or your family will rebel eventually and spend it. The danger there is that the break out from this self imposed denial is not controlled and you could end up spending far more than you should.

It is really okay to spend some money once in awhile and to have some nice things. The important thing is to do it in a planned and measured way. You want to allow yourself enough of a reward for your hard work and self-discipline to stave off those urges to blow it all and yet keep enough control to continue to save money and spend less than you earn.

The 10-10-10-2 Method

For most people saving 10% of their earnings for long term savings is a challenge but is feasible. Even if it is not immediately possible by exercising discipline, over time you can reduce your expenses and increase your income so that you can save 10% for long term investment.

Although you may not immediately have an additional 10% to save in time through careful control of your spending and perhaps working a part time job or running a small home based business, you can earn enough to save another 10% for short-medium term needs, like vacations, gifts, and home improvement projects.

Everyone will benefit immensely from giving to causes or needs other than your own. It may be your church or a charity. If you can work your way up to giving 10% of your earnings to charity, you will see tremendous rewards come your way from this.

Finally, there is the 2% remaining amount – this is your pressure valve. This is what you allow yourself to spend on anything you like. It may be an anniversary gift for your spouse, a toy for your child, or it may be something just for you. The important thing is to control this amount, to keep it to the 2%, and to spend it however you wish.

Building Up to the Full Method

Using this 10-10-10-2 method, you have 68% of your income left over to live on. For most Americans anyway, it would not be possible to live on 68% of their income. Most Americans spend nearly all or all of their income each month.

You need not feel frustrated or discouraged if you cannot imagine living off of 68% of your income. You need to take control by slowly building up to the full method outlined here, one step at a time.

In your first month, you may use the 1-1-1-1 method, that is, you use 96% of your income to live on and pay bills, you save 1% for the long term, 1% for short term, 1% for charity and 1% for your spending desires. Think about it this way: let us say you earn $10 an hour or $1732 per month. After taxes let us assume your take home pay is $1420.24. One percent of that is $14.20. You put $14.20 in your long term savings; you put $14.20 in short term savings; you give $14.20 to charity and you spend $14.20 on whatever you wish. You now have $1363.20 left over to live on. Your aim then is to reduce your expenditures so that you can live on $1363 in a month. If that is truly impossible, then you supplement your income by $56.80 during a month to pay for this savings and giving program.

Over time, you increase the percentage of each category until they reach the 10-10-10-2 level. One day, when you do reach financial independence, you will be able to easily increase those amounts again, but for the present, this is your goal.

The satisfaction and sense of self-control you will experience through this method will be tremendous. You will feel like you are controlling your own money instead of life controlling you. You will begin to build savings, and you will still have 2% of your earnings to spend any way you like.

This is the optimal exercise of self-discipline in your financial affairs. Try it for just 2 months and you will find it works so well that you will want to continue it forever.

Chapter 18: The Biggest Mistake

The biggest mistake when learning self-discipline is to take on self-discipline as if you already know how to discipline yourself or discipline someone else. Or someone may say, "This is the way, and it's the only way." You see, the knowing how is the big mistake. Why is that?

Let me explain. Once we know how, say to make a banana bread, there is no room, or opening, for the possibility of another way. You already know. It is a dead-end street. The book is closed. To be self-disciplined takes many years of trying different ways to achieve specific outcome. It's like trying on a pair of shoes; it may take many attempts at finding the one that fits you.

What about baking a banana bread? Aren't there many ways of making a certain cake? Now, take a moment and just Google any desired recipe, and you will perhaps see hundreds of ways to make that recipe.

Once you are willing to investigate new way, a new world will open up. I could give you a list of ways to learn self-discipline, and you wouldn't know which one worked best for you until you went through the process of learning each discipline. There will always be distractions to pull you away from what you have learned. There will be little things such as an unexpected visitor that takes your planned time. There could be sickness, or events that will get in the way of your discipline.

One mistake that will really stop you from learning self-discipline, is that little voice that we listen too. That voice that says, "You don't have to do this discipline any more; you are fine." Learning self-discipline, and then putting it into practice, is an ongoing experiment, so have fun with it.

Conclusion: Get Things Done

We've covered exercises that will help you become a more self-disciplined person. However, it doesn't mean you should start changing every single aspect of your life right away.

To be consistent and able to remain still in the phase is the most powerful element of self-discipline. If you adhere to your routine and reach a long-term goal in one aspect of your life, achieving the same in other areas will be easier. Success tends to breed success, but first, you have to experience some small wins – and they are the most crucial in the health and fitness department.

Moreover, give yourself a reward every time you accomplish a milestone. The size of your achievement does not matter; it is the self-confidence you build to acknowledge self-discipline that really matters.

When planning your goals in life, look for reasons as to why they are significant to you. This will fuel you up and will motivate you intrinsically.

Failing is normal. Everyone fails. Don't feel bad about yourself. It is not a reason to quit so remind yourself to get back up and focus again.

If you find yourself giving up when working on difficult goals, choose a difficult skill or sport to master and dedicate yourself to the process of learning. Use it as a tool for self-introspection and building your arsenal of weapons to deal with self-defeating thoughts and behaviour.

Everything valuable in life requires time and dedication. The world wants you to prove you care about whatever you're chasing after. Only the ones who can maintain discipline, motivation, determination and commitment over the long term will enjoy the reward of achieving their goals. If you exhibit this kind of attitude and constantly remind yourself of it, I'm sure you'll push through all the obstacles and get wherever you want to get.

-- Logan Hawkins

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Thanks for exploring this book with me. Now that you know how to stop procrastinating…

…could you kindly leave a review on the link below?

Thanks,

Logan

P.S. Reviews are like giving a warm hug to your favorite author.

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https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07FPLYC6X

BOOK TWO

The 7-Day Self Discipline Blueprint

The Modern Applications of Stoicism

Book 2 of the Self Discipline Series

Logan Hawkins

Introduction: The Modern Applications of Stoicism

Stoicism is the philosophy that reminds us that life is unpredictable, and how to adapt to it. It makes us understand how to navigate our way in a life filled with ups and downs.

The teachings of the Stoics will teach us that life is brief and each day is a passing moment. They help us develop a strong and steadfast character and

better self-control. They also help us realize that the main source of discontent and dissatisfaction in life is our very own tendency to make impulsive decisions.

Stoicism will serve as our guide on how we can redirect our destructive thoughts into a more positive outlook on life. We will understand that in this world, we cannot control external factors. We cannot control others or circumstances. What we can control is how we think, react and behave in response to those external factors.

This book aims to introduce to you the philosophy of stoicism. We will learn how it can be applied to make traversing and living in the modern-day easier and happier.

We will begin with a brief introduction of what is stoicism, how it applies to the modern way of life, and how self-discipline is key to be successful. You will learn the 7-day self-discipline blueprint, with each day's focus on a specific stoic principle.

The hope is as you navigate the present times one day at a time, you will be able to integrate the stoic discipline. Time to change your outlook and way of life for the better.

Chapter 1: The Stoic Concept

The stoic concept helps people maximize and use their positive emotions. It aims to reduce the onslaught of negative emotions and help develop a person's character to be strong and adaptable to change. It reminds us to focus on what is important and find value in the simple things.

The stoic ideal is not designed to be complex and boring. It is easy to understand, use and apply. It will offer you a practical, simple and easy way to change your life for the better.

The Brief Beginning

Stoicism was founded in around the early part of 3 rd Century in Athens by Zeno of Citium. It was originally dubbed as zenonism, but later on renamed to stoicism to give significance to the place where Zeno and his followers often meet, in a painted porch or Stoa Poikilê.

Because the porch was located in a public area, people would pass by and hear the interesting debates that happened there. In essence, stoicism started as a principle of the streets. It was a philosophy of the common folks rather than the belief of the aristocratic populace.

The concept spread and became a popular mantra to people, including famous individuals such as Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus. These three, later on, became the principal stoic leaders, and what we come to know about the philosophy is largely based on their writings.

For almost five centuries since its founding, stoicism became one of the leading philosophical standpoints. It became a popular civic discipline in the Western world. Poor and rich folks alike practiced stoicism. People integrated the philosophy in their lives in the pursuit of happiness.

Centuries passed and the once glorified philosophical concept faded and was almost forgotten. It was not until the early 1970s that it became popular again, thanks to the rise of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which became its main philosophical foundation. Authors like Ryan Holiday, William Irvine, and more helped spread the concept through their writings. And here we are today.

Stoicism and the Modern Day

Applying stoicism in the modern day can be a cause of many raised brows. This is because there are factions that believe that stoicism is not practical. To them, stoicism only promotes indifference and lack of emotion.

This is a misconception. Stoicism promotes a steadfast control over your actions and behavior in the face of trials and problems. It teaches us how to find happiness in trying times.

In the modern era, these ideals fit. Here are the main reasons why:

It surfaced as a response to trying times.

Stoicism emerged as a philosophy decades after the fall of Alexander the Great. It became popular among the masses because it offered peace and security to those who believed in it in times of crisis.

Stoicism did not promise material security; people of those times were losing properties and possessions constantly. It did not promise peace and happiness in death and the afterlife. It was a time of war. It promised those who believed they would be able to find happiness in their current lives. People would learn to be content with what they had and find happiness within themselves.

It is the foundation of globalization.

Stoicism became popular during a time where people held strong to their traditions and were scared of foreigners. It paved the way for people to accept change and embrace diversity.

As Epictetus once said, “We are citizens of our homelands, but above all, we are members of the great city of gods and men.” The emperor, Marcus Aurelius, also supported this by reminding himself the love he felt for his city should be the same for the rest of the world. Seneca also voiced his opinions on the slavery-driven times of the Roman Empire. He prompted his fellowmen to remember that the people whom they called slaves came from the same stock. They also lived under the same skies and were living breathing beings who could die, much like themselves.

It is a promoter of leadership.

Great leaders are those who know their capabilities and accept their limitations. They are those who can accept failures and not dwell on them. They use their failures as the stepping stones for betterment.

This kind of mindset is highly supported by the stoic philosophy. By allowing us to understand that worrying about material things only hinders us and we should focus on the important things, we learn to develop tolerance to failure. Stoicism allows those who believe in it to be well-

suited to change, to stand strong amidst challenges. These characteristics are what make great leaders.

With stoicism, you can develop your sense of leadership. You will learn to prioritize and balance your career, relationships, and life. As you learn to balance and anchor yourself, you will be able to help others balance theirs better as well.

Stoicism and Self-Discipline

Self-discipline has always been a desired trait that a lot of people seem to fail to be consistent in. This can be routine habits like waking up early or setting the bed every morning. It is the failure to get these things that can affect the big picture.

The main problem with a lack of self-discipline is not because these things are difficult to do. The root cause is lacking the self-control to impose self-discipline on ourselves. This is where the stoic ideal comes in.

One of the main points stoicism emphasizes is the importance of self-control: control over our impulses, actions, responses and over ourselves.

The late Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, believed that self-discipline should be rooted in our human nature to engage in something we value. We should work with care and care about what we are doing.

In his book *Meditations* , Aurelius strongly suggested shifting your mindset for better self-control and self-discipline. This should start in the little things. For example, when you find it difficult to wake up early, remind yourself that you have a purpose in doing so. You have work. You have school. You have something to do. Yes, the bed is comfortable but as humans, we are not made to live in comfort every day. We have a job to do as part of nature to help keep things in order. All the animals and the plants play their roles every day, so we should too.

According to Aurelius, as creatures of nature, we should love ourselves. We should love our natural-born duty and that is to love what we do. Dancers

love dancing. Misers love money. Children love to play. Employees love being employed. Bosses love being bosses.

We should respect and love the very purpose as to why we wake up every day. If we shift our mindsets into that state of thinking, then self-control and self-discipline will become easier.

Stoicism - Logic Without Emotion

The austere characteristic of stoicism was to make Rome a better empire. Many believed it then in Rome, many have believed it in recent decades, and many believe in those same principles, now. The goal was for all of mankind to live with conquered passions and to use reason to guide one's decisions.

Stoicism's principles could have saved a human Rome had they been adopted accurately. However, to speak austerely and objectively in unpassionate reflection of such principles, one sees the ironic truth that a human world in which Stoicism was the rule, in which Plato's philosopher king ruled, and in which the ideals of Marcus Aurelius were made manifest, would be strikingly inhuman.

Stoicism was the governing Roman philosophy, and yet, as it is with most idealistic notions, was never adopted into action by the general populous. One of the fundamental beliefs associated with Stoicism is there is a common law, one that is unchanging for all men regardless as to their acceptance of Stoicism. So, according to this philosophy, one encounters that Stoicism, as are most if not all philosophies at the fundamental level, is really just a description of the preexisting.

To study or to believe in Stoicism is to simply come to terms with and accept the already existing fact of this common law and governing reason; to then use this knowledge to control and conquer one's self would be the incorporation of its practice. However, it is unrealistic to believe in the assimilation of a singular principle into an entire empire-to believe that every citizen will follow a single set moral principle and way of life. Yet unrealisticism is not enough of an excuse to forgo necessity, therefore we continue on to a deeper point.

The philosophy of Stoicism, the idea of using reason to understand the common law of nature in order to conquer the passions and judge correctly and unbiased, even so far as to cast judgment upon one's self, is strikingly and yet inherently flawed in its own practice. When one uses such an unpassionate rule of the mind, one must look not only inward, but also at the very principle of Stoicism itself. Ironically, the flaw in Stoicism may be seen only from the view of a Stoic-from the vantage point of one already under a Stoic influence; one must don Stoicism to accurately analyze its principles.

Stoicism's conquest of the passions and utilization of the common law through reason goes against our very nature as human. It is our passions that make us human-our passion that gives us strength and ambition to surge forward, often against innumerable odds. The wild uncontrolled passion of the lover, those emotions that drive him to do the insane, to throw his life into harm’s way all for the sake of gaining love, is very impassioned.

The deep reservoir of feeling uncovered in a poet's work that seems to ooze out of his heart and quill pen onto the paper that holds the content of his existence is certainly impassioned. The sailor who prepares his ship and sets sail time and time again to embark upon new discovery, physical or metaphysical, reveals the unchartered and choppy waters of a sea unconquered, of a sea which calls and beckons the daring to brave her waters, of a sea of passion.

And although the lover may burn in the fires of the castle or in the fires of unrequite, he will still fight for love; although the poet may embitter and despair through the mysterious ironies he may behold, he will still write for truth; although the sailor may struggle in vain to climb to the top mast of his sinking ship which has been tossed and turned by the unhindered waves of the sea, he will still sail for freedom. They will all continue because it is in our passions that our greatest work is accomplished.

It is not through reason that love is understood-love unreasonably finds and chooses those who are most times unprepared and unexpecting. More accurately stated, it is through reason that passions are understood-but the passions are still present. It takes the combination of both unhindered

passion and alienated reason to reach the moderate virtue of wisdom. Were reason followed unbridled, it would be as unbeneficial as if passions were followed unbridled-which would be worse, I do not know. The two polar extremes are neither helpful nor infinite.

A life ruled by reason would be undoubtedly uplifting and inspiring but would lack the spices that give life fulfillment and enjoyment. "The True and the Good, wisdom and virtue, the general terms beyond which Stoicism cannot get, are therefore in a general way no doubt uplifting, but since they cannot in fact produce any expansion of the content, they soon become tedious." (Hegel, 200).

Stoicism has inherent flaws, truly, yet all human doctrine is imperfect by nature of human creation. Yet, even apart from the imperfections bound to be present, the lifestyle of the Stoic, to me, still seems to be lacking; the life-view exemplified by Stoicism would be a purely human standpoint that remains out of touch with a deeper experiential basis. (Kierkegaard, 27-34).

"Beauty can be defined, yet only understood through interaction-through actually seeing that which is truly beautiful. In the same way, life may be defined through reason, yet it is only understood through passionate interaction with its inner workings and experiences." T. Hoffman

Stoicism: Do Some Peoples Childhoods Set Them Up To Be Stoic?

When it comes to self-development, a lot has been said about how important it is to be able to experience self-control and to be resilient. Naturally, these are two incredibly important abilities to have in life.

If one is unable to control themselves, it is going to be a challenge for them to achieve anything worthwhile. Instead, they will most likely get caught up in endless distractions and trivialities.

An Analogy

One way to understand what can take place, if someone has no control, can be to imagine a child in a toy shop. In one moment they will be drawn to one area and, in the blink of an eye, they will be drawn to another area.

This child won't be able to stick to any one area, which will stop them from getting an understanding of anything. The reason being is as soon as they start to concentrate on one toy, they will end up seeing another toy and soon end up walking away.

A Wasted life

To behave in this way as an adult is going to stop one from being able to stick to anything. Just like a child in a toy shop, they can start something and then put it to one side shortly after.

There caomes the impact this will have on their career, along with other areas of their life. For example, if one can control themselves, it is most likely going to be a challenge for them to eat sensibly and to exercise on a regular basis.

Where has it all gone?

One could then look back on their life and wonder what they have been doing; it may seem as though life has just passed them by. Their emotions and their thoughts will then have controlled them, as opposed to one being able to manage these parts of their being.

Without the ability to keep their thoughts and feelings in check, it will have had a negative effect on their life. One will be like a small boat that is tossed around the ocean, not a big ship that can handle just about anything.

The Other Part

And if one is unable to keep going during the setbacks that arise, it is also unlikely they will be able to achieve anything significant. As soon as things heat up, so to speak, they will drop out.

They might be fairly big built or they might not, but what they won't have is the inner muscle that will enable them to keep going. Someone like this will want an easy like, not the strength to handle the challenges life brings.

Another Analogy

This will be like going to a gym and not wanting to lift anything that is too heavy. This will make it easier for them to lift things, yet what it won't do is allow someone to become stronger.

It could then be said that they will be wasting their time, and it might have been better if they had stayed at home. Taking this into account, having the ability to tolerate pain is clearly vital.

The Dark Side

However, while being stoic is going to allow one to handle life, it can have a negative effect if it is taken to the extreme. Or to be more precise, this can be something that takes place due to someone's interpretation of what it means to be stoic.

Through reading up about it, someone can believe they need to deny how they feel and to basically dominate their emotions. Their mind is then going to be in a constant battle with their body.

One-dimensional

Being this way may allow them to move forward and to achieve their goals, but it can also set them up to have problems when it comes to connecting with others. Their emotions, the things that will allow them to connect to others and for others to connect to them, will be pushed down.

They are then going to be human, but they might come across as though they don't really feel anything. This can then set them up to have a very lonely existence, and what they achieve probably won't fill this gap.

A Deeper Look

What someone like this may find is they didn't have a good relationship with their emotions to begin with, with this being the reason why they were drawn to stoicism. Or why they came to believe that behaving in this way was what it meant to be stoic.

One could then continue to deny how they feel and believe that they were doing the right thing. This would have provided them with validation they needed to keep the truth at bay: that they are avoiding how they feel.

Way Back

This can show they are carrying a lot of pain due to what took place during their early years. Perhaps this was a time when they didn't receive the care they needed in order to develop a healthy relationship with their emotions.

At this time in their life, pushing their emotions down would have been a way for them to handle the pain they were in. As a result of what they experienced, it would have also most likely given them the ability to be able to handle a fair amount of pain.

Awareness

If one had an early childhood where they had to disconnect from their emotions and had no other choice than to tolerate extreme pain, it is not going to be a surprise if they are drawn to 'stoicism'. This form of stoicism is then simply going to be another defence that one will use to avoid their inner wounds.

If one can relate to this, and they want to become an integrated human being, they may need to reach out for external support. This is something that can be provided by the assistance of a therapist or a healer, for instance.

The Effects of Stoicism in Our Life and the Lives of Others

While talking with a new partner about her administrative needs she asked, What is it you do administratively speaking? I paused a moment and replied, I can do anything. After an additional brief pause I added, It is best you tell me what you need and then I'll let you know if I can assist on a case-by-case basis.

My reply might at first sound somewhat inflated depending on how one perceives what was shared. To repeat, I said, I can do anything; I didn't say there might not be an occasional glitch, a misstep, or perhaps that I might

fail to produce a desired outcome - hers or mine - which is an entirely separate subject.

This isn't just another play on words or a different spin on the fact humans can do anything; the question is do humans have the commitment and resilience to look at the results of their actions, and more importantly want to investigate how they interpret inevitable missteps, glitches, and failings associated with our humanity?

Humans fail. It is our being wrong that reflects what's right, and it's our fragility that points to our strengths - all of which are critical reasoning factors in the maturation process of life.

Stoicism - It's a Beast!

The dictionary defines Stoicism as "the repression of emotions and indifference to pleasure or pain." [Ref. dictionary.com]. In ancient Greece and Rome, Stoics believed "people should strictly restrain their emotions in order to attain happiness and wisdom.

Hence, they refused to demonstrate joy or sorrow." [Ref. dictionary.com]. Some 2,000-plus years later there is still a belief that stoicism is something to be admired or copied as it infers to and supports an exalted sense of knowing.

It is not difficult to envision a lot of profound Greek thinkers, philosophers, astrologers, etc. who possibly identified with a false sense of superiority based on some profound understandings they had. It's also not farfetched to envision many Roman politicians, military strategists, gladiators and such who saw stoicism as a manner of behavior that kept them elevated from the uninformed masses.

No wonder stoicism is rampant in today's society, especially when thousands of years have passed in which joy and sorrow was suppressed rather than welcomed through the various indicators of feelings and emotions that mask truths.

A wise man once said, "Truth is sorrow... ". This is why society doesn't support the investigation of life failings and resultant wounds, nor is there a wide-spread understanding relative to how this attitude is interpreted in the intangible and manifested on the tangible level. Without sorrow there is no recognition of joy; a natural frequency or sine wave of life that traverses the entire spectrum of the human consciousness.

Society seems to have difficulty discerning outward appearances with a degree of accuracy; stories that would have you believe in the courage, strength, and wisdom of a person who has gone from a down-trodden placement to that of a winner, from hardship to prosperity, or from victimization to victorious are based often on beliefs associated with a stoic attitude -- not applicable truths.

Contrary to the beliefs of Stoics of ancient times, wisdom isn't garnered and happiness perceived when the stoic resists the investigation of negative intent hidden in interpretations. Straight-forward, honest self-reflection will prove this understanding to anyone who welcomes such a commitment to life. Granted it's tough to undercover and dissipate an ego the size of Texas; it's even tougher and infinitely more difficult to undo what is set into motion when stoicism prevails.

Stoicism doesn't allow others to sense what it means to falter and fall; to pick yourself up and get on with living in such a way that doesn't keep others in the dark; questioning their own interpretations, which may be appropriate but lacking a certain degree of maturity.

Courage, sincerity, and authenticity reside in the willingness to humbly acknowledge infinite unknown factors that were part of an equation that was faulty from the get-go. Unbridled joy and ease does not mask the intangible wounds of our psyche. It puts life in perspective akin to the essence of our wisdom, which is not achieved through stoicism.

And so it is that I could answer my client with a sense of understanding relative to the beast of stoicism, and do so without denial, ignorance, or non-acceptance of my own egoic failings. There are to be no more people left guessing or questioning what could be set straight immediately through

fragilities recognized -- acknowledged when appropriate -- and managed; correcting subtle course changes when they occur.

Through the cycle of stoicism, I finally got what it means to alter a life path direction either in myself or in others; which in essence when acknowledged provided more insight relative to my own blueprint and the greater, more complex matrix of life.

Chapter 2: Monday – Self Discipline and Knowing

Knowledge is a very powerful thing. It is the foundation for everything. In stoicism, knowing is a very important factor for ingraining the ideal into yourself. If you want to understand stoicism, practice it and live it, you first need to understand and know two things: your Self and your Environment.

Know Your Self

Your self is your main enemy, rival, and friend. Every decision you make is accountable by no one but yourself. Hence, you must know yourself well.

Seneca once said “not to give in” to the impulses around you. Be in control of yourself. Always expect the day to be a new one no matter how routinely things may be. You must always expect that every day will bring about new thought processes. Every day you will act and respond to different things. You must always remind yourself that with each new day, a lot of things can happen and you cannot control them. You can only control your way of thinking and your response to these events.

If you know you’ve got a full shift at work, accept that a lot of things can happen every minute you spend there. Condition your mind to expect this. Condition your mind to respond accordingly.

How will you respond when you get surprised at work? Do you cry? Smile? Be shocked? How will you respond when you are in a difficult situation?

Will you crack under the pressure? Will you surrender? Are you going to breakdown and panic? Or will you stay calm and make swift decisions?

Knowing and controlling your responses and your actions can help you better prepare for a day filled with a minefield of possibilities.

Know Your Environment

Everything around you is governed by uncertainties and you can never know what will happen. To prepare yourself, you need to connect to your environment and the world around you. Look at the bigger picture. There are a lot more things bigger than your existence.

Understand that you are part of the bigger picture. You are like an actor in a movie, so you act according to the scene given to you. There may be a script provided, but you need to internalize and connect to it so you can prepare an adlib when the situation calls for it.

The world is like that. It is one big film where you act according to nature's directive. Sometimes the directive will need you to stick to the script, but most of the time you need to insert a few well-improvised adlibs.

What Can You Do?

To better understand yourself and your environment, you need to reflect. What will you be doing today? What decisions will you be making? What are the possible outcomes of these decisions? How will you respond to these outcomes?

Every morning when you wake up, take a few minutes to go for an early morning walk or jog. As you enjoy the early morning sun, dig deep into yourself and think, "How will I do my duty as a human being today? How can I make my day satisfying and calm not just for me, but for others?" This way, you are not only developing your body, but also your mind and your understanding of yourself.

Raising Your Levels Of Self-Discipline And Productivity

The word discipline, of course, has lots of negative connotations. But what about self-discipline? Well, frankly, the fact of the matter is you do not hear the word "self-discipline" enough! And the truth is, neither "discipline" nor "self-discipline" should have associated with them the negative connotations they have. After all, many people have a desire to build a better future for themselves - and how do you go about reaching this "better future" better than through self-discipline!

Now, it is important to realize one does not simply "decide to be more self-disciplined" and suddenly discover they are leading a better life. Instead, you need to know how to properly raise your levels of self-discipline in your own life.

Know your goals: The very first thing you need to do, if you want to have more discipline in your own life, is know what the goals are you are hoping to achieve. This does not just go for short-term goals, either, but goes for long-term goals as well!

One of the most difficult roadblocks in the way of reaching long-term goals is that they can seem so far away and so overwhelming, you never take steps to get there. But when you know what your goals are, it will become much easier for you to formulate a plan.

Know how you will get there: This is the step where you will be formulating a plan for how you will reach your various goals. Of course, for short-term goals, "knowing how you will get there" can often entail simply setting aside a day to work toward these things you are wanting to work toward. For long-term goals, however, break things down step-by-step, and figure out what you can do each day in order to continually work toward these goals you have in your future.

One day at a time: As you are working on becoming more disciplined in your own life, it can be easy to reach a point where you are getting upset with yourself for not reaching the heights of self-discipline you are hoping to reach. Rather than taking this "big picture" view, however, you can make things easier on yourself by simply taking things one day at a time.

With each day, ask yourself, "What can I do each day to reach the goals I have in my future?" Once you have done this, it will be easier for you to make things simpler on yourself by approaching each day with the goal of "doing what you can do that day."

Look back: And finally, realize it can be extremely valuable to pause and look back on the progress you have made over the months you have worked on being more self-disciplined! As you continue to work toward becoming more self-disciplined each day, it can become easy to miss the fact you are continuing to improve in this area! By taking the time to reflect, you can continue to become encouraged as you move forward in life!

How To Use Self Discipline And Personal Knowledge Stay On A Diet

Make an absolute commitment and you do not have to commit again. You have made up your mind and you will not waiver. You will have plenty of times of temptation at first, but you will not waiver. Other people have had the same temptation and decided to overcome and stay with their diet goal. You can do this.

Pray for help . Dieting is challenging and sometimes very difficult. It is good to summon the help you need from a higher source. God knows who we are and He will certainly help if we are trying earnestly. You can do this.

I have heard a lot of people say, they have tried "this or that" diet and they don't lose weight. It is elementary educated information that if food does not go in the mouth, there will be weight loss. If we cut way down on calories, we will lose weight. We have heard stories of people who are held captive and have very little food and they do lose weight. You can do this and lose weight if you do not eat as much as you have been eating. You can do this.

Recognize that the physical size of the amount of food may have little to do with the calories that may be in them, keeping you from losing weight. A small piece of pecan pie may have 800 calories, but you can eat a "truckload" of plain green beans for the same amount of calories!

When you are tempted to eat something that is not on your diet, think of all the times you have eaten calorie-filled desserts and whatever food you enjoy, and tell yourself you've enjoyed all that in the past, but now is the time for denial. You can do this.

Realize this strict diet doesn't go on forever. It won't take you forever to lose the weight you want, if you stick to it. You will have to change your main habits, but you will not have to sacrifice at the level you are sacrificing while being strictly on your diet. You can do this.

Notice when you use food for consoling yourself. Refuse to succumb to it. I know exactly what you are going through, but food is not the answer. Try thinking of a different approach (go for a walk). If a certain person has upset you, then all the more reason why you need to lose weight and get control of all facets of your life. You can do this.

Commit only to yourself you are going on a diet. This is probably different advice than you hear from other people. You don't need to report to anybody. This approach accentuates the fact that you are in control of your body and mind and report to no one else about your diet. Additionally, this is a part of the approach that you believe in yourself and your commitment to stay on your diet. You do not need feedback from other people. You are on this diet because you are doing it for yourself! You are disciplined and can do this!

Tell yourself, even 24 hours after you begin if you are tempted, you have come too far and you will not turn back. You are moving ahead and you are strong! You will not accept failure. It is your mindset. You know you can do this.

Know that there are so many foods out there with high fructose corn syrup and refined sugar that make you hungrier. Snack foods have additives that make you want to eat more and more. Don't succumb and be the "sucker" that these companies are hoping you will be, so they can make more money. You can do this.

Think of all the health problems you may be avoiding if you maintain a healthy weight. You may avoid diabetes, high blood pressure, high

cholesterol, hip and knee replacements. It just goes on and on. The medical field loves overweight people because they make lots of money off of them.

It is amazing how many doctors just keep writing the prescriptions and arranging for procedures when there is no mention for one to change their diet and level of exercise. They just keep writing prescriptions for a lot of health issues that could be avoided by watching your diet and losing weight. A lot of people would be way ahead by just cutting sodas out of their diet. One small adjustment at a time makes a big difference.

Our renewed health should be our number one motivator. When I went to the doctor before I started on my diet, the numbers from the blood work were not favorable. I knew I had really "let myself go." The doctor said nothing about weight gain causing this or any suggestion to get more exercise or change my diet.

The only thing she wanted to do was write prescriptions. Because I realized these numbers were just over borderline (others may need medication at that time), I told her I would stay in touch because I knew when I left her office, I was going to change things and try not to lean on prescriptions if I didn't need to.

For me, it totally worked. My blood pressure came down to the level it was when I was 20 and my other blood numbers adjusted themselves to within normal bounds. It was a great feeling to know I had done my part to help myself. I realize others may have health problems they need medical help with, but it gives one great peace to know you are helping yourself in all ways, as much as possible. You can do this too.

Realize that a little bit of the wrong food can add many calories to your diet. A lot of people don't realize that tablespoon of catsup may add 50 calories, or that delicious, nutritious salad can be undermined with a high calorie salad dressing. Write down what you eat and the number of calories. It will be easier to skip the condiments. You can do this.

Don't make this a time where you are cooking and baking all the foods that are a temptation to you. Although after a week, I started to see results and was motivated to turn down even a slice of birthday cake I had baked.

There is no reason to needlessly "torture" yourself. Save the cooking and baking for later. You can do this.

Know you can do it without expensive diet plans. Again, if the food is not going in the mouth, weight will be lost. There are many prepared, expensive foods that are called "diet plan" foods and have more calories than just staying with un-embellished, basic foods and cutting down on your serving size. A vegetable serving size is usually 1/3 of one cup and a serving of meat is usually 3 - 4 ounces, at the most! Americans have lost track of what a normal serving should be causing most to gain unnecessary weight. You can do this.

Realize with eating the right foods, your body can do with so much less than what Americans are used to eating each day. Some hours you may feel like you are going to starve to death, but think about the good food you have already eaten today and assure yourself you have had enough food for your health and appetite. You can do this.

Educate yourself. I went home and read about the causes of high blood pressure, and high cholesterol and triglycerides, etc. Spend time reading labels in the grocery store on a day it is not busy and you won't be hurried. There are so many foods that people think are "diet" food that add tons of calories and fat to their diet and sell at a high price. The numbers on the labels will tell most of the truth. You can do this.

Do not engage in a physical exercise program while you are staying strictly on your diet. I walked consistently, but not strenuous, far distances. Your body is trying to adjust at this time and you do not need to add one more thing in the equation for it to adjust to. I recommend you start exercising after you have lost the weight you desire. You can do this.

Hang an outfit in view in your closet that you want to be able to wear or listen to music that brings favorable thoughts of when you were young and thinner. When you are tempted to eat something that is not on your diet, go to these sources for motivation. You can do this.

Rejoice in your accomplishment. As you see the results, there will be no turning back. You will never want to look like you did before. You will love

your new self, the way you feel, and your new image. It is so much fun to go clothes shopping after you have obtained your goal! You can do this.

If I can do this, most anyone can go on a diet and stay on a diet until their goal is met. Look at yourself in a new light and continue with a philosophy of eating only what you need to eat and what will sustain your good health. Most of the high calorie foods offer virtually no nutrition and only add problems.

Remember your health benefits, your self-esteem benefits, the probable years you are adding to your life, and the quality you are adding to your life. There is an old saying that says, "your enemies tell you what you want to hear and your friends tell you what you need to know. " Remember these philosophies and stay with it. Good Luck with your important decision to go on a diet and stay on a diet!

Chapter 3: Tuesday – Self Discipline and Willpower

Most people admire and respect strong individuals, who have won great success by manifesting will power and self-discipline. They admire people, who with sheer will power, self-discipline and ambition, have improved their life, learned new skills, overcame difficulties and hardships, reduced their weight, rose high in their chosen field or advanced on the spiritual path.

The truth is everyone can reach high levels of willpower and self-discipline through a practical method of training. These inner power are not reserved for a few special people.

Will power and self-discipline are two of the most important and useful inner powers in everyone's life, and have always been considered as essential tools for success in all areas of life. They can be learned and developed like any other skill. Yet, in spite of this, only a few take any steps to develop and strengthen them in a systematic way.

What is willpower?

It is the inner strength to make a decision, take action, and handle and execute any aim or task until it is accomplished, regardless of inner and outer resistance, discomfort or difficulties.

It bestows the ability to overcomes laziness, temptations and negative habits, and to carry out actions, even if they require effort, are unpleasant and tedious or are contrary to one's habits.

What is self-discipline?

It is the rejection of instant gratification in favor of something better. It is the giving up of instant pleasure and satisfaction for a higher and better goal.

It manifests as the ability to stick to actions, thoughts and behavior, which lead to improvement and success. Self-discipline is self-control, and it manifests in spiritual, mental, emotional and physical discipline.

The purpose of self-discipline is not living a limiting or a restrictive lifestyle. It does not mean being narrow minded or living like a fakir. It is one of the pillars of success and power. It bestows the inner strength to focus all your energy on your goal, and persevere until it is accomplished.

Both of these abilities are required for daily actions and decisions, and also for making major decisions and attaining major success. They are required for doing a good job, for studying, building a business, losing weight, bodybuilding and physical exercises, maintaining good relationships, changing habits, self improvement, meditation, spiritual growth, keeping and carrying out promises and for almost everything else.

One of the most simple and effective methods to develop willpower and self-discipline is by refusing to satisfy unimportant and unnecessary desires. Everyone is constantly confronted and tempted by an endless stream of desires and temptations. Many of these are not really important or desirable. By learning to refuse to satisfy every one of them, you get stronger.

Refusing and rejecting useless, harmful or unnecessary desires and actions, and intentionally acting contrary to your habits, sharpen and strengthen your inner strength. By constant practice your inner power grows, just like exercising your muscles at a gym increases your physical strength. In both cases, when you need inner power or physical strength, they are available at your disposal.

Here are a few exercises:

- Don't read the newspaper for a day or two.

- Drink water when thirsty, in spite of your desire to have a soft drink.

- Walk up and down the stairs, instead of taking the lift.

- Get down from the bus one station before or after your destination, and walk the rest of the way.

- For one week, go to sleep one hour earlier than usual.

- If you like ice cream, don't have any, for a day or two.

These are only a few examples of the many exercises that can be conducted in order to develop will power and self-discipline. You might think that practicing these exercises is being tough on yourself, but they add much to the storehouse of your inner strength.

By following a systematic method of training you can reach far, have more control over yourself and your life, attain your goals, improve your life, and gain satisfaction and peace of mind.

Self-Discipline and Willpower

Self-discipline and willpower always go hand-in-hand. It is difficult to achieve self-discipline without willpower. It is even more difficult to get things done with sheer willpower and no self-discipline. To achieve either one, you have to first aim for both.

Build Your Inner Strength

A lot of people think willpower is all you need. You have to remember that willpower is like the muscles of the body. If you overexert your muscles too hard, they will give out due to fatigue. The first few days or weeks when you try something new, be it a new exercise, a new diet, or a new routine, your body does well. You foresee great progress. But as the weeks progress, you notice you are back to doing the old routine or back to late-night snacking.

The same thing happens with willpower. At first, you look forward to the prospect of doing something new. You are ecstatic with the change and barrel right through it all, willpower blazing. But because you did not condition yourself to sustain that willpower, you end up quitting instead of following through.

If you want to succeed, you need to discipline and condition your willpower. You need to build your inner strength. Remember that knowledge gained to achieve your goals will count as nothing if you don't have the willpower to apply them. And without self-discipline, it will be difficult to sustain that willpower.

What Can You Do?

It's not easy to build up your inner strength and sustain that willpower. You have to start with the small things and build your way up.

You can start with your posture. Maintain a straight posture throughout the day. It can be hard initially, but keep at it and eventually, it will get easier. You can also try switching hands while doing simple tasks like brushing your teeth or holding dishes. Once you build up the inner strength to do tasks as menial as these, you can then proceed onto bigger stuff like your exercise routine and daily food intake.

Dealing with Pleasure

As humans, we have always been susceptible to the pull of pleasure. Who wouldn't want to feel good? Who wouldn't want to eat that oily, scrumptious meal, or drink a bottle or two of that intoxicating liquor? Despite knowing the negative consequences, most people willingly make

themselves susceptible to the dark side of pleasure. Although there are a lot of factors that come into play, the main precursors are the lack of self-discipline and willpower to resist.

It is one thing to verbally abstain from something. However, if someone dangles that sweet chocolate bar in front of you, it is going to take every ounce of willpower to hold you back. If you do not have the self-discipline to resist the temptation, then willpower will be useless. In the same manner, regardless of how disciplined you are, if you do not have the willpower to back that discipline, you will fall on the pleasure trap.

Giving yourself time to enjoy pleasurable things is good because it makes you happy, content and satisfied. However, if you do not know how to control yourself then you will drown in pleasure until it consumes you.

What Can You Do?

How can you deal with the allure of pleasurable things? How can you keep yourself from going overboard? How can you exercise self-discipline and willpower to take a stand?

Well, there are several things you can do. The first thing that you can is to remove all sources of temptations around you. Start simple. For example, if you know that you will be tempted to eat junk food on sight, then do not stock up on junk food at home. If you are aware that you have been watching too much TV in your room even though there is an upcoming project to finish, then move it somewhere else. If you know you can get carried away when drinking liquor, then don’t stock bottles at home or be sure to refrain from going to popular drinking places.

You need to remove the things that can tempt you. Remember that no matter how strong your willpower is, it is dispensable. It will run out so do not waste it.

The next thing you can do is to reduce the stress you are experiencing. One of the main reasons why we tend to overindulge in pleasure is because of too much stress. When stress is present, our willpower decreases which also affects our self-discipline. What you can do is to practice breathing

exercises. If you are stressed at work, give yourself a few minutes to just sit and breath. Yoga and reading are also great stress relievers. If possible, avoid the stressful environment altogether.

Deal with Insults and Anger

Anger is a very strong emotion. Someone cuts the queue in front of you, you get angry. Someone yells at you, you yell back. Someone insults you, you start fuming and hurl back insults.

In cases like these, people who do not have a strong grasp on their temper usually snap first. And in bouts between people, those who cannot contain their anger lose first. Hence, you need to learn how to control yourself.

This is where your willpower and self-discipline comes in. You need to train yourself to remain calm, and not to let the effects of your anger overcome your better judgment.

What Can You Do?

We all know keeping your anger in check and maintaining a strong lid on that bottle of rage is not easy. Once you can maintain that strong grasp of your emotions, you will notice a drastic change on how you deal with irritating situations. Here are some things you can do to boost your willpower and patience.

You need to calm down. Riding on the wings of anger will do you no good. It will only make things worse. We all know in the heat of the moment, people can say a lot of things and most of those things end up as regrets. To avoid this, you need to pause and take deep breaths. Do this until you are calm enough to think and talk without being confrontational. Collect your thoughts. This will give you time to better understand the situation and develop a better response. This will also give the other party the chance to do the same.

Once you are calm, express yourself . You need to express yourself in an assertive manner but with a calm preposition. Do not be confrontational as this will only add oil to the fire. Express your concerns without the

intention to hurt. You must also avoid criticizing or putting the blame on the other party.

Try to use “I” while talking instead of “YOU.” For example, instead of saying, “You made me upset because of what you did,” you can say, “I am upset because of what happened.” This will deliver a message you are not blaming the person, but are expressing your displeasure and are looking for a resolve.

After all is said and done, forgive . Forgiveness is a very important factor to allow yourself to be happy. Holding a grudge for too long will only make you bitter and cloud your vision of what is important in life, and the positive things that are around you. If you forgive someone who has angered you, it might also help to rebuild your relationship and make that person cherish you more.

Apply some humor in your life . Do not be so serious. Make yourself happy by seeing the fun side of things. Everything can be enjoyable no matter how menial or hard it can be if you can find something to make it fun. If you feel that washing the dishes is too much of a chore, then play some music while you are doing so. You can even sing along.

Music can help soothe your troubled thoughts. Watch a lot of fun movies or read funny quotes and books to lift your gloomy mood. Avoid sarcasm if you can. Don’t tolerate it and don’t be sarcastic to others as well. Sarcastic words will only hurt people and will cause more harm than good.

Give time to yourself . Stress is the main driver of most anger issues. You need to give yourself time to relax. If you are feeling stressed at work, give yourself a short break. A few minutes of sitting and savoring that cup of coffee can do wonders. If you can get a few days off from work, go somewhere fun. You can spend time at the beach with the family.

You can also spend those days alone at home savoring the peaceful and quiet vibe. Find a good book to read, arm yourself with a nice warm cup of coffee, and wear your most comfortable clothes. Sometimes all we need to make ourselves relax is the good old “me time.”

Feel good about yourself . People who like to irritate others usually have a lot of insecurities about themselves and their lives. If you are confident and comfortable in your skin, it will be harder for people to anger you. If you show others you do not have any qualms about yourself and how you live, then their insults will not affect you. In the end, they will lose interest in disturbing the peace. After all, these people are usually after a reaction, and no reaction is “boring.”

Meditation and Inner Peace

According to Buddha, “life contains suffering” and the reasons for this suffering are quite profound. It can be as a result of a failed relationship, the passing of a loved one, an illness, a feeling of inadequacy or personal disappointments. Most of our sufferings today stem from the hassles of daily life. Waiting in line at the grocery store. Getting stuck in traffic. The loud barking of the neighbor’s dog. Low income. Too much work to do at the company.

These things are minor hassles in the grand scheme of things, but they trigger our stress response. The body’s natural way of defense steps in — fight or flight. Our ancestors used the fight or flight response as a defense mechanism in the face of danger such as a sudden animal attack. The response stresses the body to prepare it for either fighting or to run away fast.

In this modern age, most of the stress that we are experiencing today is more psychological than physical. Some of these are the long hours of commuting to work, doing house chores when you arrive home, demands at work, or even high prices of goods and bills. This means that every day, we face some form of stress.

Experiencing and living with stress can take its toll on our health. A lot of illnesses today stem from too much stress. High-blood pressure, due to too much consumption of fatty foods brought about by stress eating, is one such example.

Because we cannot avoid the sources of stress around us, we must learn how to mitigate and balance them out. One way that experts find very

helpful to do this is through meditation.

Meditation will help decrease your rapid heart rate. It will regulate and normalize your blood flow. It will help you breathe deeper. It will reduce the production of the stress hormone which is cortisol. It will also increase your immunity to diseases and decrease inflammations. Finally, it will help your body metabolize all the nutrients and use oxygen more efficiently.

If you want a restful sleep and to maintain your focus and attention when awake, meditation is your answer. People who go home stressed find it difficult to sleep at night, causing them to be restless and unfocused during the day.

Meditation allows you to get in touch with your true self. It will help you realize that those things you've previously attributed to yourself such as your possessions and relationships do not define you. They are just reflections of what you want to have or want to become. Your true self lies inside you shining but that shine is clouded by your worldly idea of yourself.

Once you tap into that true self, you will realize that there are great things that you can accomplish. You will find happiness in the simplicities of life. You will begin to accept your flaws and failures and give as much importance to them as your strengths.

What Can You Do?

With meditation, you will be able to reverse the effect of the stress response on your body. It will help you be in a state of restful alertness and you will be alert yet relaxed.

To meditate, look for a comfortable place. Then, sit or lie down in a comfortable position. You can surround yourself with pillows. Then, close your eyes and breath naturally. Gradually focus your attention on your breathing. Focus on how your body moves as you inhale and exhale. If you lose focus, bring it back and observe your breathing again.

As a beginner, you can do the meditation exercise two to three minutes each day. As you become used to the routine, you can increase the minutes and meditate longer. The longer you can focus on your meditation, the better.

How Meditation Can Increase Your Willpower

It takes willpower to stick to a new health regime, like going to the gym, doing a home yoga practice or having a daily walk. It's so much easier to flop onto the sofa and watch TV instead. You may want to give up smoking, but lack the willpower, or be one of thousands of people who want to lose weight, but just can't keep it together.

So how do we start to control the estimated 50,000 thoughts which race through our minds daily? Meditation masters have shown that controlling our minds and increasing our self-discipline really is possible. As the Zen saying goes, it's better to be a master OF the mind rather than be mastered BY the mind.

Meditation helps to develop willpower. As a meditation teacher, I have seen thousands of people take control of their thoughts and decisions through using easy techniques. Meditation works by helping us become aware of the steady flow of thoughts which crowd our mind. Usually, these thoughts are negative, and stop us making good choices.

For instance, we may think we are unable to resist the temptation of that last chocolate, remembering all the times when we have given in before. And then, almost unconsciously, we grab the chocolate and swallow it (and then feel guilty!)

When we meditate, we become more conscious of our thoughts, and we can start to change them. In meditation we work with the chakras, or subtle energy centres, which bring in more power into our emotional, energetic and spiritual levels. The Manipura chakra, the energy centre in the body just above the navel, is traditionally known for controlling our willpower.

When we use the breath to activate the Manipura chakra, our inner strength increases and we find it easier to make conscious decisions. For example, when I see that piece of chocolate, I can think more clearly about the effect

it will have on my body, and can easily make the decision to pass. In effect, after using meditation, I become more conscious about all my actions and thoughts, and can choose what I really want (i.e. I really prefer a flat tummy to that piece of chocolate!)

Meditation for willpower

1. If possible, do some Yoga movements first - I recommend Energy Block Release 1 to clear any blockages in your energy system.

2. Sit in a comfortable position in the floor or on a chair. You can use a meditation stool, or sit on a cushion in a cross-legged position, so that your pelvis is tilted forward slightly, to help you sit in a comfortable upright posture.

3. Mentally relax each part of your body, from your feet up to the top of your head. Let your body melt towards the earth, while at the same time, focus on your spine reaching up gently towards the heavens. Keeping the body alert yet relaxed, take your awareness to your breath. Breathe in and out naturally through your nose, feeling peace and stillness filling your body and mind. Continue for a few minutes.

4. When you feel a sense of stillness increasing, mentally breathe in and out of your heart chakra in the centre of your chest. Feel that each breathe opens up the petals of the heart centre a little more, allowing love and light to radiate out. Feel that you are accessing the highest part of yourself - where there is only joy and compassion. Enter into that feeling for a few minutes, continuing to breathe in and out of the Anahata (heart) chakra.

5. Now allow your awareness to relax into the Manipura chakra, which is located just above the navel. Consciously draw in the light and energy from your heart centre into your solar centre, and feel the power from your higher self-empowering your centre of willpower.

Breathe in and out of the manipura for a few moments, then allow your awareness to rise back up to the heart chakra again. Rest your attention in the heart for a little while, and bring your awareness back to your body and how you are sitting. Take a few moments to adjust to your environment.

Gently move your fingers and toes, stretch your body and open your eyes when you are ready.

Chapter 4: Wednesday – Self Discipline and Actions

Actions always have a heavier impact as compared to words. It is not how you think that affects your way of life. It is how you act out those thoughts that makes your life either easy or difficult. Sometimes it is also the main instigator of many conflicts.

The main driving force that influences our actions are our emotions. Yes, thoughts are the beginning, but once feelings are incorporated, the actions that we carry out are dependent on how we feel. If we are thinking about a relaxing walk in the park, we also associate the idea with a feeling of relaxation and happiness. Because we feel happy, we execute the idea by going for an actual walk to the park.

If we think of something sad, we feel sad, and that sadness also reflects on our actions—we don't smile, we feel lazy, we cry. If we think about how someone has erred us, we feel angry. When that anger expresses itself through our actions, we can hurt others and ourselves as a result.

Our actions are most dependent on how we feel rather than on how think. Since we cannot really control how we feel, we can only control how we act out those feelings. Remember that your actions rather than your thoughts and feelings bring about the consequences.

Our actions can get us fired from work, get us involved in many shady things and can cause us to hurt our loved ones. They can even cause us to hurt ourselves. Hence, many stoics have emphasized on dealing with our actions in response those emotions, rather than on controlling them.

Act Right

Since our emotions link to our actions, we can only take responsibility of our actions and make sure that we do not act rashly and inappropriately. Rash actions only lead to regret and more trouble.

In situations that triggers our emotions, we must remain composed and think things through before acting out. Keeping our emotions in check is the key factor in making good decisions.

As Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus and the other stoics emphasize: what other people do and say doesn't matter. What matters is what you do or say in response to them. The stoics emphasize the importance of learning to tune out the voices of impulsive behavior and actions based on emotion. However, this doesn't mean that you deal with these actions with lack of emotion. It is simply that you apply your emotions wisely.

This means even when the taunts and actions are hurting you, you need to be the bigger person and respond according to what is right. As Marcus Aurelius once said, we should "Live as nature requires." We should work towards the greater good, towards something larger and more significant than ourselves.

What Can You Do?

As the philosophy of stoicism emphasizes doing what is right, as someone who wants to apply the philosophy in their daily life, if you find yourself in a situation that overwhelms you, do not let your emotions cloud your thinking. Do not immediately jump into an emotional argument. What you need to do is to pause and take a deep breath. Keep taking deep breaths for a few minutes. Concentrate your mind on your breathing, your tense muscles and your heart rate. Try to calm yourself. Untense those muscles and steer your heartbeat back to a normal rate.

You have to think of positive thoughts. Dwelling on negative thoughts will only instigate more negative emotions and create a vicious cycle of regret and suffering.

Once you feel calm enough, organize your thoughts so you can find the best action to take then weigh the pros and cons of your options. Choose the action with the least amount of unnecessary pain and regret.

Once you conquer the will to act rashly and be able to act justly and fairly, the sacrifices you will make on dampening those anger impulses will help

you develop a sense balance to yourself. It will help you be stronger and sturdier, much like how Seneca once likened the who experience into being like an oak tree. A tree whose roots grow deeper and hold stronger the more storms it successfully survives.

Solve Your Problems

We are always pegged with daily problems. They become too much when left unaddressed. Life stressors are everywhere—low finances, failed relationships, unemployment, work stress, etc. How we balance and solve these problems is our only saving grace to a more peaceful living.

To balance and solve problems, we need to act accordingly. There is no rush in solving problems. It doesn't matter how tedious the action is as long as you will get the solution you need. The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius lives by the virtue of "action by action." It means no matter how frustrating the process maybe, as long as you know it will help you solve your problem, then do it.

If you need to find a needle among the straws in a haystack, then even if you need to examine every straw, then do so. You need to embody persistence and unceasing spirit to solve your problems. Because as you solve your problems one action at a time, you will arrive closer and closer to the solution you seek.

What Can You Do?

Problems are everywhere. That doesn't mean that we should let them dictate our actions. To avoid that from happening, we have to address these problems and provide an effective solution for them.

Tackle and address them one at a time. As the stoics Seneca and Aurelius emphasizes, it doesn't matter how long it will take, what matters is you are taking action to solve these problems. Furthermore, these problems and actions will also be your springboard to better yourself. As Seneca once said, your problems are merely training grounds for a better you.

To take action, here are some helpful tips for you:

Acknowledge that there is a problem . Before you begin to solve your problems, you need to acknowledge that they exist first. Some people deny the fact that they have problems because facing them will only makes things worse. However, to stoics, perception of things is imperative. You have to see things objectively. You need to acknowledge the fact that you have problems. Accepting their objective presence will make them real and tangible. If they are tangible, you will be able to find a solution for them faster.

Find what the problem is. After you recognize the problems that you have, you need to identify the most pressing ones. You need to sort your problems and prioritize those that need to be solved as soon as possible. Delaying the important problems for the less pressing ones will only aggravate the situation. For example, tackle the financial problems first. They are usually the root of a lot of problems.

Simplify the problem . Once you have sorted your problems, you need to break them into simpler parts. Simplifying the problem will make it easier for you to address them one action at a time. In the example above, you need to find out what are the factors that cause you to spend too much. Are you overspending on your monthly phone bill? Do you often go shopping for new clothes? Did you happen to buy unnecessary items? Know the minor details to get a better understanding of the bigger picture.

Address the issues within the problem . As you look at the problem objectively and stoically, you will be able to see the issues that instigate it. Why is your monthly phone bill high? Why would you buy these items when you don't even need them? Is there no cheaper alternative? Digging deeper into the reasons behind your decisions and actions leading to the problem will make it easier to find an effective solution for it.

Find a plausible solution . Once you have examined the details, you can now find the plausible solution to the problem. Remember to consider all possible angles to the problems before you decide on the possible solution.

Balance Your Duty

We deal with a lot of things to do every day and sometimes they can be overwhelming especially when we mind other people as we work. When things become too overwhelming, we get stressed. When we get stressed, we become irritated, unfocused, and rash. These feelings are not productive. They only hinder us from getting things done. They impede on our patience to do our work, which makes us neglect our duty.

To prevent things from getting out of hand, we need balance. We must learn how to manage our work and duties so that we can perform them better. We must learn to select what we hear from others and we know others are doing. As Marcus Aurelius once said, “I do what is mine to do; the rest does not disturb me.” We need to keep our tasks and duties managed and leave others to manage theirs. Keeping things well-managed and exclusive will help us deliver our best and fulfil what is expected of us.

What Can You Do?

The key to a good work and life balance is proper time management and focusing on your work. If you have a lot of things lined up to be done at work or at home, you need to organize them into level of urgency. Which of these tasks are urgent? Keep a to-do list for the day on your desk at work or at home. Having this list will help you keep tabs on the day’s progress.

You also have to focus only in your work and strive to deliver what is expected. When things become too tense at work or at home and you cannot focus on the task anymore, remember to stop for a while. Focus on keeping yourself balanced first, before you continue working. Do not let yourself get burn out. Forcing things will only stress you and trigger negative emotions which in turn trigger negative actions. Keep things positive, light, and productive.

Getting Things Done: The Importance Of Self-Discipline And Good-Habit Formation

I'll start with a story. Not long ago, a member of my family left the dishwasher door down for no apparent reason. I came walking along, and because the baking pan that I was holding was obstructing my view (and also because I wasn't expecting anyone to leave the door down for no

apparent reason), I didn't see that the door was, in fact, down. My shin smashed into the edge of it, and the baking pan and I nearly fell headlong over the extended dish rack. The situation called for an interjection, and I used one.

Awhile later, after the pain had subsided (although, unfortunately, the swelling and bruises had not), I thought it would be an opportune moment to remind the family member that households have guidelines such as "If you open it, close it" for good, common-sense reasons: They help to form the basis of a considerate, respectful, and, in this case, much safer environment for all of the home's inhabitants.

The keys to success in implementing this particular domestic-bliss guideline and many others like it -- "If you turn it on, turn it off," "If you get it out, put it away," and all the rest -- are self-discipline and the formation of good habits.

And interestingly enough... self-discipline and good-habit formation are two critical keys to organizational success, too! (You saw that coming.)

So essential are they, in fact, that they're the fifth component of what I call the "five fundamentals of organization":

1. Ability: By this I mean that an individual does not have -- or is able to accommodate -- conditions such as chronic illness, physical limitations, grieving, depression, OCD, chronic fatigue syndrome, ADD/ADHD, PTSD, shopping addictions, hoarding, and/or other behaviors, situations, or conditions that hinder his/her ability to be more organized. Help is available for all of these conditions, so they need not be debilitating; but, without help, they can be serious impediments to becoming more organized.

2. Willingness: You can't make anyone do anything. People must be willing to change.

3. Commitment: Ability and willingness are excellent starts, but they must be backed up by a commitment of time and energy to the organizational process and making positive changes. Good intentions are not enough.

4. Tools: These can be physical objects such as hooks, shelves, and storage tubs, or they can be systems and processes that help people to be more efficient and effective. By the way, this fourth fundamental is the first point at which a family member, friend, or professional organizer can enter the picture to help someone become more organized, because the preceding three must already be present in order to make progress. (It's the old three-legged stool analogy: the first three must be present before the stool will stand, but it will become stronger with the addition of more legs.)

5. Habits: Ah, here they are! As an organizer, I've helped clients to purge out what they no longer need, use, or love. I've helped them to put the "keepers" back in more organized, streamlined ways. We've "containerized" until we turned purple. We've devised systems and processes that mesh with the ways in which they think, work, and live. And we've talked about how to maintain all the space, light, and order that we've created.

But that's where it ends unless clients' self-discipline and good-habit formation kick in. The first four fundamentals will get them organized, but only the last one will keep them organized because it's an inconvenient truth (to borrow a phrase) that clutter always creeps back in.

Organizers and other helpers can increase the odds of success through the work they've done, but they can't give clients that last essential component. What they can do, however, is reassure them that what arises out of their new, good habits will create momentum, and that in turn will reinforce their positive behavior and motivate them to keep up the good work.

Some people balk at this, arguing that it would be too difficult for them to change their behavior, but the alternative (and perhaps you've seen it) is surely not very pretty either. The good news is even though habits can be hard to form, once they're in place, they're also hard to break. Good habits can trick you into automatically doing great organizational things for yourself and your spaces.

So... What can you train yourself to do through harnessing your self-discipline and good-habit formation?

I believe you can make a world of difference by taking what seems like obvious -- or at least very simple -- steps. But if they're so obvious and simple, then why are they so hard to do and so often ignored? I suppose it's because we humans don't find it all that fun to be disciplined all the time. But, as I've said, if you can create positive, new habits, they'll trick you into doing good things automatically. How great is that?!

Here are some simple (and, yes, obvious) things that you can do every single day to make your spaces more organized, pleasant, and efficient. Just make a commitment to do them very consistently -- we've all heard that it takes 21 days to create a new habit -- and they'll pay huge dividends for you.

- Designate a place where you put your incoming stuff -- purse, wallet, keys, glasses, cell phone, and the like -- every time you enter your home. I call this the launching pad. Likewise, designate a place (the same place, if possible) where you put everything that's going with you the next time you leave. Using this space very consistently will mean an end to frantic running about, looking for these things.

- Wipe your feet (it saves on cleaning), and put your shoes in the same place every time you arrive home. While you're at it, hang your coat on a hook or hanger. The floor or a nearby chair is not a good substitute. These simple actions will make you feel in control, and your space will be more visually serene.

- Create one place where you put the incoming mail and other incoming papers. They may sit there for a tiny while as you tend to other things, but then move them on -- every day -- to the spot where you process your paper. Even more important are your self-discipline and good-habit formation when it comes to committing to processing the paper every day (or as close to every day as you can get).

There will just be twice as much tomorrow, so the alternative of not dealing with it today begins to look pretty daunting, pretty quickly. Daily processing -- not just shuffling around, but making paper go away -- is your salvation.

- Use a tickler file! I'm a tickler-file zealot, but it's because, with a little self-discipline and good-habit formation, a tickler file will pay off for you every

day, in so many delightful ways. Really. Trust me on this. It's not hard to use, and it will save you over and over again.

- I'm not your mother, but she'd probably say the same thing: Make your bed. Even if the rest of the room could use some tidying, your beautiful bed will be an oasis of calm and order to enjoy looking at when you enter the room. And, its loveliness may encourage you to work on the rest of the space.

- Speaking of the rest of the space, hang clothes that you intend to wear again on a hook or hanger, and put dirty clothes in a laundry basket or hamper, not randomly somewhere on the floor. (These sound so obvious, don't they? And yet they can be so difficult to carry out. But remember you're doing this for you.)

- Don't put things down; put them away. This starts with having a home for absolutely everything, because no one can be expected to put something away properly if there's no designated home for it. After that, though, it comes down to just doing it. Put dishes in the dishwasher or sink, not on the counter; put toiletries in a drawer, not on the vanity top; take the mail to your paper-processing place instead of leaving it where it landed. Spend the few extra seconds it requires to put things where they belong.

The rewards? You'll be very glad you spent that little extra time to put things away when you...

- No longer waste any time or endure any frustration or stress in looking for them the next time;

- Can have people over with no worries about how your home looks (and no harried running around first);

- Can experience pride and satisfaction about your spaces instead of self-blame;

- Can get where you need and want to be, on time, with the proper materials in hand;

- Feel calm, relaxed, confident, and in control.

What a great day your self-discipline and good habits will create when your time, energy, and well-being belong to you and not to your stuff. They'll please and delight you every single day.

Self Mastery and Action Are Your Passports To Massive Success

I don't have to tell any of you that throughout the history of the world, some people have sought to control other people's lives. From the garden-variety politician to dangerous dictators - they all fancied themselves as the anointed ones. And, when people seek to control your life, it's usually for their benefit, certainly not for yours. It is all about power. Those who have the power try to exert mastery over others.

Thankfully, we live in societies that have evolved. People are becoming much more aware of their power. We have started to realize the power we have to control our own destinies and our ability to achieve Self-Mastery. We are no longer as reliant upon, or freely accepting of, slick talking politicians telling us what to do or how to think. And that's a good thing.

The most exciting thing that I will share with you today is that the key to individual Self-Mastery is available to all of us. Each of us can achieve our own degree of Self-Mastery, and therefore, reach all of our goals, and all of our dreams for ourselves, our family members, and our loved ones.

The key to our individual Self-Mastery can be summed up in one word. That word is, "Information." Those who have access to information can have power. They can transform themselves and others in ways that were unimagined just a few years ago.

What I've said about the power of information leaves an obvious question. But before I get to that question, a few points.

All of us understand that the knowledge needed to transform anyone's life is available to everyone. It's available to the drug addict on the street corner, just as it's available to the kid in college.

It's also available to the grandmother.

It's available in libraries.

It's available with further schooling.

It's available in eBooks online.

It's available in teleseminars.

It's also available in this article.

The opportunity to pick up on the specialized information that we need to transform our lives is everywhere. Given this, Why do some people generate incredible results, while others scrape by?

Asked another way, "Why isn't every person empowered, wealthy, healthy, achievement-oriented, and successful?"

The reality is that even in our high-tech, high-knowledge world, just having information is not enough. If all any person needed were ideas - then everybody would be on top of the world. We'd all be rich in accomplishments.

The truth is that action is what turns information and ideas into achievement.

Action is behind every great Success. Action leads to achievement. Information and knowledge are only potential, until they get into the hands of someone who knows how to make himself or herself take effective and powerful Action!

I have long observed we all get great opportunities in our lives. The difference is only a very few recognize and take action with their opportunities.

Self-Mastery is all about the ability to Take Action!

What you achieve in your life is determined by your ability to take individual Action!

Sometimes we get into the self-destructive trap of thinking that those who've achieved tremendous success were lucky or have some unique "gift" that we as normal people don't have. The reality is the gift that they have is not a secret or unique or even, a "gift!"

The "gift" they have is the courage to take effective and Powerful Action. As a result, they have the ability to achieve Self-Mastery. I cannot emphasize enough that each of us can develop Self-Mastery. Each of us!

Chapter 5: Thursday – Self Discipline and Control

It is always a struggle to keep everything in control and be on top of things. Forcing the issue only causes more stress and other problems. It is for this very reason the stoics emphasize the importance of the dichotomy of control: knowing that not everything can be controlled.

We Can and We Cannot

Nature has always been and always will be spontaneous. It means that a lot of things that happen in nature cannot be controlled. With these, it is best to go with the flow and let them be. As the saying goes,“What’s meant to be will be.”As the stoic Epictetus emphasizes, there are some things that are “up to us” and there are those that are “not up to us.”

He also pointed out if we try to regard something that is not our own, it will only trouble the mind and will only push us to seek faults in everything. Furthermore, Epictetus also once said that not everything can be grasped by human power. God has left us with the “power to deal with impressions.”

As the well-known line from *Invictus* state, “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.” We can only control our impressions. We can control our opinions, desires, emotions, impulses, and aversions. But we

cannot control our bodies, possessions, reputations, or status. These things are products of nature. We cannot control when we lose our houses to a typhoon, but we can control how we cope with the loss. We cannot control when we lose our job, but we can control how we bounce back up and try again.

If you are able to understand the significance of focusing on the things you can control rather than those you cannot, you will be unsusceptible to the many ups and downs of this materialistic world.

What Can You Do?

Since there are things that you cannot control, what you can do now is to divert your attention to those things you can. For example, a job application. You tailor your resume with a mindset that you will be hired only to end up disappointed when no opportunities come your way. That is not the stoic way. Instead, try to put together the best possible resume you can make.

Prepare to accept whatever is the outcome. Accept there are factors you cannot control such the employer's preference, the qualifications of the other applicants, and more. Accept the fact sometimes the universe may favor you and other times, it won't. If you begin to integrate this mindset in your life, you will develop an equanimity to the world, giving you a more peaceful life.

Take Charge of Situations

As you divert your focus on the things you can control, you cannot go slack on them as well. You need to take charge of them to ensure you do not act rash in making decisions. Do not let your stress conquer you. Instead, conquer all those things that can make you lose control of your impressions.

You need to prepare yourself for the possibility that what you have at the moment will change. You may have the favor of the heavens one moment only to lose it the next. Hence, take charge of your responses. Everything else is temporary, so do not cling onto the temporary things too much. Focus on your inner self and understand your own emotions. As you do,

you will be more in-tuned with your emotions and you will be able to control them as the situation demands.

Do not procrastinate. Do what you have to do now and do not delay. Do not focus on insignificant things and focus on what is necessary and important.

What Can You Do?

To take charge of the different situations you may find yourself in, you must be fully aware of what you can and cannot change. For starters, you can begin with understanding that you cannot control how others perceive you. What you can control is how you react to what they say. Take charge of your emotion. Do not let the anger cloud your judgment. If somebody says something bad about you, ignore the comment and get on with your life.

You also cannot control how your boss thinks and decide on things. All you can do is expect that every day sudden decisions will happen. You have to prepare yourself to accept whatever decision there is. For example, you company decides to lay off some employees and unfortunately you are of them. Do not dwell on the grief of losing your job. Convert that feeling of grief into determination to look for another job. Being layed off is simply a sign that you need another way to gain more experience.

You also cannot control when you will lose your material possessions. For example, your wallet got stolen. Instead of dwelling on the feeling of anger and sorrow for the stolen wallet, focus on feeling relief and gratitude that it is the only thing you lost. Material possessions can always be replaced.

Adapting to Change

Change always happens. There is nothing permanent in the world. Instead of complaining about unexpected events and changes, adapt. Remember you cannot control them. Whether you like it or not, they will happen. There is no choice, so it’s either you adapt and make your life easier, or dwell on the stress it brings only to end up bitter.

For example, the stoic Seneca was once exiled to Corsica. He was charged for having an affair with the sister of the then Romam emperor Gaius, Julia

Livilla. Instead of focusing on the despair of his situation, Seneca consoled his mother for being apart from her son. Seneca accepted the situation as a change in his life. He did not let the situation shock him and cause him to lose himself. To him, it was something new. Something he needed to adapt and get used to.

What Can You Do?

Like how Seneca accepted to the change in his life, you should also accept change. It could be a loss of a family member, losing a job, or gaining something new. Surprises are all unplanned changes.

Embrace your emotions about the change. Yes, you might feel sad that a loved one died but if you keep running from your emotions and reality, you will only prolong the pain. Embrace the pain and sadness, let it out and do not keep it in. Express yourself and only then can you accept that loss is simply a change in your life.

Always look for positives, no matter how dire the situation may be. People tend to focus on the negative side of change, which makes them fear it. But if you can see the brighter side of things, you will realize you can overcome anything.

You can also help yourself adapt faster by engaging in relaxing activities such as exercise, yoga or meditation. Keeping yourself calm and relaxed will keep your thinking clear and rational. Thinking through things rationally is always better than thinking with your emotions.

Self Discipline in Positive Thinking and Self Talk

Building up self-discipline and thinking positively is sometimes hard to do. We all need discipline in order to be successful with all the challenges and problems of daily life.

We should consider building up our self-discipline with positive thinking and self-talk. In order to be successful, we need to be strong and use our positive thinking skills to keep our self-discipline in control. We need to be in control of our lives in order to succeed in the world today.

If we are thinking negative things all the time like "this isn't going to work" or "if I hadn't done this it would never have been this way" we will not get the positive results we are looking for. We must be positive and say, "This is going to work" When we tell ourselves this aloud, it is like telling our brain positive things that it needs to hear in order to overcome the negative thoughts.

Self-discipline with positive thinking can help us to become the person we want to be by setting goals. We then need to write them down and then work hard towards them, at the same time thinking positive thoughts about the outcome telling ourselves we can and will reach the goals and targets we have set ourselves.

Then as we reach each goal, we should reward ourselves by doing something special. For instance if we have decided to stop smoking and set a date for doing so, like six months, than if we achieve that goal we could take a shopping trip to treat ourselves to that item we have wanted for some time. Positive thinking and self-talk is needed to manage our self-discipline. If we're positive we want to lose weight, we need self-discipline to move from the table when we have had enough to eat. Self-discipline will tell us not to eat anymore; enough is enough.

We can change the way we think by putting some effort into the situation. We need to make a list of the changes we want to make and be positive when writing out our list we should use positive language and say; "I can lose that 10 pounds" or I will stop smoking."

We should keep telling ourselves aloud that we can and will do something and remain in control and reprogram our brain to think positive instead of negative. Taking control of our self-discipline with positive thinking will help us achieve all it is we want to achieve and at the same time will increase our self-esteem.

Being in control will also help us prevent diseases like heart and lung disease or cancer and generally stay healthier.

Positive Thinking And Self Discipline - How They Are Connected

We attempt to demystify this relationship between the most vital aspect of positive thinking, a theory that encourages one to sift through various voices in the head and only heed those that give a certain positive value to the person in terms of what it can do for improving the quality of life for them, and the main technique of bringing positive changes about.

A person depending on the power of positive thinking to see him or her through a difficult time in life also needs to understand that a certain amount of introspection, recognizing the truths one faces about one's self, knowledge of better qualities and drawbacks faced in a positive manner are the key to enhancing positive thinking skills that are needed to check level of self-discipline. Keeping this aspect of positive thinking in control is very important for those needing to exert a calm, mature degree of control over their lives so they can achieve good things for themselves and succeed in life.

Doing away with negative vibes, voices in the head and staying away from people that evoke negative, depressing thoughts in you is another way to help the positive views come to the surface and self-discipline through various tools like self-talk, writing a journal, listening to soothing music and perhaps even taking up regular physical exercise is vital for boosting the psychic energies to burst forth and do their work!

This is because negative thoughts restrict the mind from discovering feel good emotions that in turn lead to positive action while thinking positive helps the mind to open up new pathways, like flowers stretching towards sunlight that banishes the darkness of ignorance.

In the same way, positive thinking and focusing on one's strong points, positive qualities and abilities help build a healthy self-esteem, which gives one the power to ignore negative thoughts and stay guided by the positive to emerge successful in life with the confidence they evoke.

Since saying or thinking, "Oh, this is not going to work, " or "I'm not good enough," actually works to weaken a person's self-esteem and wears their armor thin. The logic points to positive thoughts working as affirmatives in helping one reach out to goals and find them achievable as they feel they have the power to conquer obstacles. The last can also be imagined away

with powerful, positive thinking, feel psychologists - much like reaching for the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

Rewarding oneself after having achieved a particularly difficult goal through the power of self-discipline and positive thinking (such as keeping to a diet, not meeting with negative people, or quitting a bad habit, etc.) goes a long way in reinforcing the power of positive thinking. It also helps one achieve a healthier mental and physical balance in life as it programs the brain into accepting change in a positive way with positive results achieved - so stick with it and go places!

After all, connecting with your inner child may well reveal certain dark spots not visited in a long time and you just may discover sides to yourself you never remembered. But then you can actively work on rhem to remove the kinks, pay attention to the positive character traits and emerge a newer, stronger and rejuvenated person - so why wait?

How To Develop Self-Discipline and Take Control of Your Life

At first glance, self-discipline seems to be one of those things in life you either have or have not got. Some people are just mega organized and appear to fit twice as much into their day as us mere mortals manage.

But it is possible to develop a better sense of self discipline if you know what to do:

Avoid distractions

You probably know what distracts you most often. Whether it's checking your email relentlessly, browsing the Web rather than researching or watching "just a bit more" television. We all have distractions we allow to creep into our life. Don't go cold turkey and cut them out altogether but do restrict yourself to certain times and an overall weekly allowance. Sure, you might go over the allowance occasionally, but you'll still spend less time on the distraction than you did before. You can tighten your allowance over time if you need to.

Schedule your time

You've probably got a diary of some sort - maybe a "real" one, more likely an electronic one. Use it more often. Start to schedule your time and make appointments with yourself. And, of course, keep those appointments! There's no point in blocking off an hour for an important project and then goofing off for most of it. Again, you'll probably mess up in the initial stages, but rather than use that as an excuse that "it's not working," instead vow to improve next time. And the time after that!

Avoid the timewasters

You'll know who these are. The people who distract you from your purpose. They may ask dumb questions, they may keep you longer at the water cooler with conversations about last night's television, whatever the reason they waste your time, cut down on them.

Obviously you'll need to do this tactically - you probably can't just tell them to go away and stop bugging you. But you can be polite and cut the conversation short. Any excuse will work - use the word "because" before it and they'll almost certainly accept that it's a legitimate reason. Go on - try it!

Set milestones and reward yourself

Most people work better with deadlines and goals. If your projects haven't already got these built in - or if the end is too far away - set yourself a target. When you reach that target, give yourself a reward. It doesn't have to be a big reward (although it could be if the goal was big enough) but it definitely has to be a reward of some sort. You'll know what incentives you so feel free to choose something that fits that.

Use hypnosis

Self-discipline is a state of mind and hypnosis is a good way of training your mind to do more of what you'd like it to do. There are affordable self-discipline hypnosis MP3s that will put you on course sooner than you'd imagine. I will personally recommend checking out Dane Krauss as he has an excellent book on this subject.

Self-Discipline - Getting Where We Want to Go

The following are some ways to increase our inner strength and determination in order to develop self-discipline:

- Decide to lose ten or more pounds and stick to our diet until we have reached our desired weight;

- Make a decision to have a more toned body or to develop our muscles and stick to an exercise program until we have achieved our goal;

- Decide to quite smoking by the end of three months.

Or we can encourage ourselves to do something that needs to be done but we don't want to do or feel uncomfortable doing such as:

- Cut the grass regularly every weekend even if we'd rather be playing computer games or something else we enjoy;

- Make a personal commitment to take the dog for a walk every day, rain or shine;

- if we are shy, make the decision to initiate a conversation with someone we don't know every time we go shopping;

- I the breakfast dishes are still in the sink every night when we come home from work, determine to do them before we sit in front of the television. (The job will be much worse to do the following day.)

Other ways of practicing self-discipline are:

- If we love chocolate, we won't eat any for a week;

- If we want to go to Mexico but can't afford it, we save all of our loose change and put it into a jar towards our trip instead of going for our special coffee every day;

- We can practice self-discipline when we are self-employed by establishing regular hours and working them even if something more enjoyable comes

up;

- We can make ourselves a realistic list of what we wish to achieve each day and commit ourselves to completing each task on our list.

All of these things require self-discipline and the ability to self-regulate. If we cheat, we are only cheating ourselves. When we work towards becoming self-disciplined, it will be necessary to be focused, diligent, persistent and persevering.

Becoming self-disciplined helps us to withstand hardships and to endure difficulties in order to achieve our goals. Once we learn this important trait, we will feel in control of our lives and be much happier and self-contented.

Do you quit things a short time after you've started them because you don't have the willpower or self-discipline to complete the task? If we quit things because we don't like them, we'll never become self-disciplined or accomplish our goals.

There is a saying, 'Quitters never win and winners never quit.' If we all followed that old adage, we'd all be winners. But by learning to be self-disciplined, we will have chosen the path to success.

Chapter 6: Friday – Self Discipline and Non-attachment

As humans, we are highly connected to the term “attachment.” It is our nature to always equate something or someone to a certain value. The lower the value something is to us, the less we care. Yet, when we see something as very important and valuable, we tend to have an immense care towards it. We become attached.

If we meet someone who manages to form a great bond with us, we become attached to that person. Today, human understanding of attachment has shifted. A lot of people these days have equated attachment to the desire to own. This desire, if left uncontrolled, will only lead us to an unhappy life.

To avoid being unhappy and be riddled with problems, ancient stoics did not have a sense of attachment to anything.

Marcus Aurelius once wrote that his happiness should not be dependent on anything. Nature does not inculcate that we should derive our happiness from the things, events, or people surrounding us. Our desire and happiness usually stem from how we label something. If we see something as “good” or “desirable,” we aim to have it and are happy when we do. We abhor things that we deem “bad” or “undesirable.” This labeling is our preferred state and is not natural.

As Aurelius detached himself from those material things, we should also strive to do the same. If we free ourselves from dependence on our health, reputation and wealth, we will achieve an unshakeable happiness.

Detach from Material Things

As humans, we always give importance to things that we perceive to have great value. Although it is a good trait to have, it becomes a problem when we shift that perception of what we deem “important” to material things.

For example, you see a brand-new car. You’ve always wanted to own that car, so you work hard to earn enough money to buy it. When you buy that car, you feel immense joy. But is that feeling of joy true happiness? Or is it pride talking?

This kind of scenario is quite common today. We desire a lot of material things and we revolve our life around them. A new house, dress, car and a higher salary. The more we engage in painstaking tasks to gain those material things, the greater we value them and the more difficult it is to accept when we lose them.

Marcus Aurelius once wrote in his book *Meditations* , “Accept humbly, let go easily.” This line advises us to simply accept that we own these things, but to not place our pride and value to them. Accept them with humility and keep in mind that receiving those things do not make you any better than anybody else. Remember your true value is not measured by your possessions, status or reputation. It is measured by the way you live your

life. The less you place high regard to these material things, the easier it will be to get on with your life when you lose them.

Accept You Own Nothing

When you came into this world, you came with nothing. That is your true self. Who you are now is a result of your preferences. The more you attach yourself to these preferences, the more difficult it is to detach from them. The more difficult it becomes, the more you forget how to truly be happy.

Seneca once said, “Above all, my dear… make this your business: learn how to feel joy.” This line is an apt reflection of how we achieve happiness. Do not rely on material wealth to achieve happiness. By doing so, we forget about the simple things in life.

Seneca also points out that although we should detach ourselves from the material preferences of the world, there are also things that we cannot avoid no matter how detached we may become. Hence, Seneca urges all those who value the ideals of stoicism to also accept that inevitable.

For example, pain is a difficult emotion. It brings sorrow and sadness. But, if you accept the fact pain is inevitable, then you will come to understand it is an emotion that is not yours, but one that stems from factors you cannot control. The same with relationships.

Seneca points out that non-attachment does not mean you should avoid relationships. You should enjoy being in a relationship with the understanding that wanting it and being in it are two different things. Wanting is your preference while being in a relationship without expectations and demands is simply experience.

What Can You Do?

Aurelius pointed out if you want to experience true happiness, you must first be self-aware. Understand that true happiness does not stem from the external factors around you. It is rooted within your mind and your soul. Pursuing worldly possessions and superficial preferences will only lead to misery and more wanting. The more you want, the more miserable you will

become. Let these things come to you and if they come, accept them with mindful indifference. Understand that everything is temporary and what you have now will be gone someday.

Here are some helpful tips to help yourself to embrace non-attachment:

Observe within. As Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and all the other stoics point out, non-attachment starts within. You need to examine yourself. What is your line of thought when it comes to particular things? How do you feel about these things? You need to recognize the things that can make your attachment spike. Examining how these things affect you will help you understand yourself, and how to detach from these things.

Relinquish your ego . Sometimes it is quite difficult to distinguish what is affecting your emotions and thoughts. Most of the time, your emotions and reactions result from your ego. You may think you have been wronged when you do not get something. You feel you are owed. However, the truth is that it is your ego talking. You cannot lose something you've never had. Seneca points out that "No person has the power to have everything they want, but it is in their power not to want what they don't have, and to cheerfully put to good use what they do have." You are disappointed about losing the chance to gain fame and fulfill your ambition. Marcus Aurelius, in his book of *Meditation* , pointed out the foolishness of pursuing fame and praise.

Accept uncertainty . In his famous quote from *Meditation* , Marcus Aurelius says, "External links are not the problem. It's your assessment of them. Which you can erase right now." He points out the necessity of accepting uncertainties, because nothing is certain in the world.

What we deem as something certain is a product of our assessment. If you accept that things are always uncertain, you destroy the boundary you have set for yourself. By doing so, you expose yourself to more possibilities. As Epictetus points out, we should not aim to control everything that happens around us and expect them to be something specific. Rather, we should let them happen as they should, and with that our life will flow easier.

Meditate . Meditation is always a good way to examine your self-awareness. Spend some minutes every day sitting and diving into your inner world. Detach yourself from the turmoil around you. Examine your thoughts and you will realize the patterns in your life you need to change. Clear your mind and experience inner peace.

The Art of Self-Discipline

Learning ways to become more self-disciplined has a lot of advantages. It can help you succeed at work, help you reach personal goals and effect the way you live your life in general. Many people have things that they would like to accomplish but are not disciplined enough to follow through with them. There are several techniques that can help to achieve the ultimate self-discipline.

It may sound odd, but taking up a new program like karate or joining a yoga class can actually help to increase self-discipline. The patience and time needed to be able to do yoga and learn the poses increases self-discipline skills that can be forwarded on to other aspects of life. And the discipline skills learned through karate classes can also have an impact on the way you think.

Self-discipline also involves creating plans to work by. For example making up some short term goals and long term goals can help you stay focused and reach your goals, because you have visually mapped them out. The plans should also include steps to achieve them. Write down outside sources that may help if needed, for example if you want to lose weight, you could write down steps that include the sources you might outreach to, such as a support group or fitness trainer.

Staying disciplined enough to finish goals could also take some self-rewards. Rewards work for kids so there is no reason why they shouldn't work for adults too! There is nothing wrong with giving ourselves rewards for things we do as well.

For example if cleaning your house brings you down, make a pact with yourself that when you're done, you spoil yourself with an ice-cream or a

new piece of clothing. It may sound silly, but sometimes rewards work and can help justify getting something or buying something new.

You can tell yourself, I wouldn't be buying this leather coat if it wasn't for the fact I finally painted the deck! Giving yourself a pat on the back is great for staying disciplined on future projects.

Staying organized and learning ways to be organized are key elements in staying disciplined. At work there is nothing beneficial to being unorganized. People who are organized are more likely to get promotions and stay noticed with coworkers and bosses. If you need to, buy a good agenda, new calendars, pads of paper and new pens.

Being organized involves, taking lots of notes, writing everything down, filing things quickly and keeping up to date on projects. Keeping notes, papers and your desk clean will help you to keep organized as well.

Time management's skills are important when staying disciplined. The worst thing you can do is set yourself up for failure. Don't tell yourself you can finish a project in one hour if you can't, or don't say you can paint your house in one weekend if you might not. Because when your own personal deadlines fail, you might feel like your let yourself down. And that might hinder your future plans as you do not have the confidence to follow through.

Instead really plan out your projects and give short step by step timelines. For example you could say that in a day you would like to have the kitchen painted and then another two days for the living room. As you cross out your painting projects you will be achieving your goals and staying on task that is a sure way to keep motivated and stay disciplined to finish the project.

Learning Self-Discipline Without A Struggle

Just the questionable thought of "how do I begin learning self-discipline" is a big step in your personal growth.

You now have begun the first step in having what you want in your life.

Learning self-discipline is already in place. If you brush your teeth every morning and every evening on a consistent basis, that is self-discipline. You are consistent, right?

You need to have a structure. What is a structure? A structure is like a chair with 4 legs. Take out a leg and the structure falls in. So number one, put a structure in place that will support you in having discipline in life. That's what you want, right? I use many structures to support me, and it all comes down to my word. How do I support myself in keeping and being my word?

So, what structures do I use? I use my daily calendar on the computer; and you can use whatever calendar that works for you as a structure. As soon as I say I am going to do something, I WRITE IT DOWN and place this in my daily calendar. Use this like a road map; and do it consistently.

Prior to going to bed, I review my next few days of plans, and then I take a 2x3 card and write it down for the next day, and manage my day with that. So learning self-discipline is just that. Self-discipline.

Begin with the first step and be consistent. Write it down and you will be learning self-discipline.

Why Self Discipline Breeds Higher Self Confidence

Low self confidence can lead to several common reactions including blaming others, withdrawing into a shell, getting angry and even resorting to crying. A good self confidence activity is a potent tool that will help to change your pain and low self esteem into power and improved confidence. By practicing with this tool, it is easy to strengthen up your self-esteem muscles.

Karate is an excellent activity to help you build up greater self-confidence. It is an activity that helps to make you feel more confident about facing new challenges in life. Once you start doing karate, you will notice an immediate (and positive) transformation in your attitude towards life.

Ballet is another activity that can help you in building up your self-confidence. Learning these steps will make it much easier to build a strong

foundation in life and the discipline required to master ballet can go a long way in building up self-confidence.

Learning magic tricks is also one of the best self-confidence activities. Learning to perform a magic trick or two can and will give a person a real boost in self-confidence. This is because once a person becomes capable of carrying out tricks successfully their confidence will grow in leaps and bounds.

Learning magic tricks requires repeated practice, which in turn helps to develop self discipline as well as concentration. Learning to perform tricks in front of an audience is not easy and requires careful thought and a certain level of dexterity. It also requires learning to perform the trick without a hitch and without letting out the secret to the trick. Such abilities, once developed, will encourage social skills and empathy, leading to higher self-confidence.

All these different self-confidence activities have one thing in common and that is to be more disciplined in life. Self-discipline can go a long way in building self-confidence. Willpower is another important factor that helps in building up self-confidence.

Is your lack of self-confidence still bothering you? If so, why not try out these self-confidence activities that will help to build up your self-confidence?

Using Consequences to Build Self-Discipline

When our children break a rule, make a mistake or misbehave we want them to learn from what they have done. We know that for every action there is a reaction and for every cause there is an effect. It is important our kids learn this idea as well.

One of the simplest tools we've been given to use as a parent is consequences. Often nature deals this one out for us and we don't even have to intervene for learning to take place. For example if a child decides not to bring her jacket and it is a cool evening - the natural consequence will be for her to be cold. If we really want this learning to take place we would not

have to do anything and the cool discomfort our child feels will be enough to teach her to think ahead and bring a jacket in the future.

Where this falls apart is when we determine nature is too cruel. We tell our child she should bring a jacket, she chooses not to and is cold. We give her our jacket, extra sweater or blanket so she doesn't need to suffer. Of course, we are likely verbally trying to straighten her out the whole time - Next time you bring your jacket like mommy told you, right? These words do not have nearly the impact of Mother Nature and send a mixed message. If you want to be warm next time you better look after yourself, but just in case you don't, I'll do it for you.

The point to get from this is nature does a good job of teaching little livable lessons. This is not about debating how cold it needs to be to warrant intervention since if it was very cold and risk of frost bite or hypothermia were present you wouldn't have given her a choice in the first place. What this is about is allowing nature to deal out consequences when it is possible and safe to do so.

Of course, there are times when nature would deal out consequences for us, but we are not willing to let this happen. For example; running across the road could naturally mean getting hit by a car. Since this is an example that typically we are not willing to let happen. We have to figure out a different way to teach our kids. We can do this by putting the consequence into place ourselves.

These are called logical consequences and as such are meant to be logically thought out and enforced. If they are determined in advance they are easier for us to calmly put into place and have a greater chance of teaching our children. Consequences created in the heat of the moment tend to have an emotional overtone and are often more severe than necessary or unrelated to the offense.

For our children to learn from a consequence they need to be fair, logically connected and calmly enforced. If we lose our cool and start yelling at our child she will tend to focus more on our behaviour then what she has done wrong.

If we are calm, but make the consequence completely unconnected or unfair, learning tends to be overshadowed by the injustice of it all. As a result when we are creating our own consequences we want them to be a well thought out and calmly delivered.

Consequences are a tool that can really work well if you show restraint when Mother Nature is involved, and focus on what your child is learning when she is not. They teach our kids how to think while promoting responsibility and self discipline. Enforced by a calm, caring, consistent parent this is definitely a tool worth having in your parenting pack.

Chapter 7: Saturday – Self Discipline and Fatalism

The many disappointments in life stem from expectations. People often focus on their expected outcome of an event rather than letting things happen as they are meant to happen. If we learn to accept there are things that are out of one's control no matter how much we want to change the outcome, then things would be simpler.

This very idea of letting things happen on their own and accept whatever happens is something that the stoics relished – fatalism, or letting fate decide. In his *Handbook* , the Stoic Epictetus emphasizes that life would be smoother if we let go of our wishes towards things around us. If we let things be, they will happen as they should. If we keep on clinging on to our expected outcome, it will only lead to disappointment.

Stoicism also emphasizes that the fatalistic standpoint must remain external. Events, disasters and other people are not controlled. Things will happen as they are meant to. But, our responses and feelings towards these events are controllable. We can control our responses, and we should seek the best possible response.

Go with the Flow

The concept of letting things happen as they are meant to is the foundation of Stoicism. This very concept is the main precedence to the motto, “Go with the flow.” According to Epictetus and Seneca, wanting and expecting things to happen within a specific set of ideas only bring unhappiness. It is better to go with the flow and accept whatever comes along.

As Marcus Aurelius once wrote, “Nothing will happen to you which is not comformable to the nature of the universe.” This means that everything already has a predetermined flow based on how the universe works. Aiming to deflect or diversify that flow from the original path is useless.

No Other Way but the Way You Can

Since nature has its own course laid out, we should not attempt to go against that course. The only thing we can do is to exert our best effort to provide the best possible response. For example, you’ve been working for years in your current company and are expecting to get promoted. When you don’t, you start to question the fairness of things.

Remember that your boss’ decision is out of your hands. Instead of moping around about it, do what you can to boost your chances. Remember that you are in charge of your own destiny. You may ask for help from others but the decisions, actions and plans are all you. So make the right choices.

What Can You Do?

We need to accept that regardless of our decision, whatever nature designed to happen will happen. You walk your dog in the morning. You put a leash on him and head out. Regardless of what the dog does—it may stray from the road, stop and sit, lie down—it will still follow you in the end because it is bound by the leash. We are also like the dog. We are bound by the laws of nature, so all we can do is accept things as they happen and prepare ourselves to adapt.

In Aurelius’ *Meditations* , he talks about a man who may not lose his little child, but should pray that he may not be afraid to lose him. We should change our mindset from attempting to counter nature’s flow. Instead of aiming to avoid misfortune, we must aim to survive the outcome. The same

goes for wishing for things to go our way, only for the opposite to happen. We should focus on how we can go with the flow and prepare for where it takes us.

As a practitioner of Stoicism, you must control how you think and approach the actions that you make. You have to focus on being progressive. Discipline yourself to be able to face life's surprises and respond to them accordingly.

Self-Discipline - Is Your Top Success Tool

I am sure you are like everyone else out there and you want to achieve meaning in your life. There are unfortunately no short cuts to success or to invite meaning and fulfilment, into your experience. They are all the result of self-discipline and consistent commitment. Of course the moment you start down your journey towards the success you have visualised, you will start to enjoy the fruits of your endeavours. The challenge is to remain focused, patient and driven enough to stay on the path you have chosen. This is where discipline comes into it.

What drives you?

Self-discipline, is that driver, which will get you off your butt every day, so that you will actually take the action, you need to take to succeed. The sooner you start down the road of daily discipline and then remain committed to take goal specific action daily, the sooner you will achieve the success you desire and the better will be the results you will achieve in the end too.

Responding to new Ideas

So when should respond to any new idea you have? The sooner you respond and begin to take action, while the idea is still hot and steaming away in your brain, the better your chances you have at achieving the success you want. This is because your desire, drive and passion are at their strongest, when any new idea is fresh in your brain and the emotion is at its peak.

Act Now

As soon as great idea enters your mind, don't wait around too long before you do anything about it.

For example: When you make the decision to start down the road towards your own personal development. Don't think about it for too long, take action immediately. Go online, while the idea is still piping hot in your mind and order that first personal development book, or go to the bookstore immediately and buy the book.

The next step is to schedule time every day to read the book. When you take action and actually use that time to read, you measure your progress daily, you will actually start to see positive results in your life. Don't forget to reward yourself, every time you keep your commitment to read. The daily reward can be as simple as a smile and allowing the glow of satisfaction to flow over you. This reward will help encourage you to repeat the behaviour every day.

Law of Diminishing Intent

As you know your drive, determination and passion is at its highest, when any new idea first comes to your mind. As time passes, so too does the drive and passion you feel, also dwindle away to nothing. The secret to turn any great idea into something meaningful is to try to translate the idea and intent, into action as soon as possible. If you wait too long the passion dies and eventually the great idea cannot even be found any longer.

Don't Hesitate - Take Action

There is no substitute for taking action, whilst the emotions are still high and the idea is strongly carousing through your brain.

Action Idea: If you want to improve your health, don't spend too much time thinking about it. Immediately go buy a book on nutrition, join a gym and then schedule time to attend gym every day. Remember whatever gets scheduled gets done.

How about lying on the floor immediately and doing a few push-ups. The sooner you take action the better will be the results and the greater the

possibility of turning the idea into something meaningful. Don't wait for too long, otherwise the wisdom of the moment is wasted.

Daily Discipline Breeds Self-worth

When you keep the commitments you make with yourself, one of the greatest benefits, which will flow to you, as a result of acting on great ideas when they come to you, is a feeling of contentment and satisfaction.. How great do you feel when you keep commitments you make with yourself?

The art of self-discipline breeds, self-worth, which in turn helps you to feel better about yourself and your self-esteem, improves too. The more positive you are and the greater your belief in yourself, the greater the chances that you will succeed at the things you attempt. This will inspire you to always try your best

Self Discipline Is The Route To Becoming The Best

I am sure you are reading this article because you search for self-discipline since you know it is the key to success. It is an African proverb that says 'lean on a mountain or be one'. Definitely you have the chance and ability to be great, but in practice many people lose out on becoming successful. This is mainly because they intentionally or unintentionally opt to be lazy, weak and to be the last in every race.

It is upon you as an individual to make a deliberate choice to have self discipline. Break the York of failure and walk in purpose and determination so as to light up your life.

If you combine hard work with determination, commitment and self discipline, you leave yourself no choice but to be the best. Keeping your level of self control and sacrifice higher than that of everyone else will definitely make you a winner. If you really put in your best effort and be positive while when everybody around you is idling, you will win and stand out to be counted.

Competition of the limited resource is high thus you must be tough and put more effort in whatever you do in order to become the best. Winning is for

those that have self-discipline to toil deep into the night while others are asleep. Be positive and put in extra effort whenever and wherever you can. It makes all the difference.

The sole aim of living should be to bring out our maximum potential and be useful to society. This way, our lives will have a purpose and direction. We will have made an impact in this world and in the lives of many. Take charge now and led the way, remember there are people looking up to you for direction, hence show them the way. All you need is to find within you the willpower and self-discipline to become.

Chapter 8: Sunday – Self Discipline, and Letting Go

Sometimes, the main barrier that makes it difficult for people to find happiness in life is the inability to let go. If we experience something painful, we cannot forget about it or let go of the pain. Usually, the more painful the experience, the more difficult it is to forget. However, according to the Stoics, clinging to past experiences only hinder us from living the present and planning for a better future.

Hence, Seneca once said that we should take our life's experiences as they come. We should consider it a "great consolation that it is together with the universe we are swept along." Epictetus also supports this by emphasizing that we are merely actors with specific roles in a grand play with nature as its director. We cannot choose the roles we perform. All we can do is play the role as best as we can.

As we play our roles well, we should let things flow as they should. Use the lessons and experiences we come to learn to guide us as we traverse this grand play called life.

Reflect on the Past

They say that our experiences are what defines us. All of what we experience lies in the past. Usually, if that experience is one that struck a

chord, good or bad, it leaves a mark. Sometimes that mark becomes too deep that it affects our daily lives. We come to rely on the past to live the present. If the past experience is bad, our present is miserable. But, if the past is good, our present becomes pleasant.

According to the Stoics though, this is not the way you live to find happiness and inner peace. Anchoring our present and future to the past will only lead you to a bleak existence. You are focusing so much on the past that you forget how to live your present, and look forward to your future.

What Can You Do?

The past is not there so that we can live our life around it. The past is there for us to reflect on. It is there so that we could learn from our mistakes and make sure to not repeat them again. Hence, we should stop clinging on our past and let it define us. Instead, we should accept the fact that whatever happened before is out of our control. All we can control is our actions towards those memories.

According to Marcus Aurelius, “You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.” This means that we cannot control anything outside of ourselves. This means that the break up, the loss, and other painful events that we experienced in our past is out of our control. What we control is how we use and reflect on those past events to help us move on.

There is no use finding ways to salvage spilled milk. All we can do is accept that we got hurt. Give yourself time and learn from that pain. Only then can you move on. Remember as Seneca said, “Time heals what reason cannot.”

Live the Present

We humans have very active imaginations. Sometimes our imagination runs too wild. Planning is important but we cannot let it take away from living the present.

As Marcus Aurelius puts it,

“Don’t let your imagination be crushed by life as a whole. Don’t try to picture everything bad that could possibly happen. Stick with the situation at hand, and ask, “Why is this so unbearable? Why can’t I endure it?” You’ll be embarrassed to answer.

Then remind yourself that past and future have no power over you. Only the present—and even that can be minimized. Just mark off its limits. And if your mind tries to claim that it can’t hold out against that…well, then, heap shame upon it.”

What Can You Do?

We must focus on the present because that is where we are at the moment. If we dwell too much on the past or imagining the future, we neglect to act in our present.

For example, we cling so hard onto a previous failed relationship, that we base our present relationship on it. We forget that the people in those relationships are different. We must learn from the past and make sure we don’t repeat those mistakes, but we must also not let it define our present relationship. The danger with living in the past is that we start to make comparisons and limit our actions and possibilities. Comparisons are bad because they cause more grief than happiness.

We should live in the moment and take life’s events one at a time. Remember, we cannot undo the past and the future is still uncertain. What is tangible is our present, so we must live it and make it a good one. Whatever we experience in our present will eventually become our past, and will be our springboard for the future.

Look Forward to the Future

One of life’s biggest uncertainties is the future. We cannot determine what our future has in store for us. All we can do is imagine the possibilities and what ifs. When we focus on the negative side of our imagination, we end up painting a bleak future. And when we do, it affects our present.

Epictetus once pointed out that it is not the things around us, but our experiences or the the uncertainties of life that upsets us. What causes us grief and pain is what we think and feel about those things or events. If we think our future is bleak and uncertain, it will only scare us. If we think our future will be good, then it will help us look forward to it. What we imagine our future to be is subject to our judgment.

Remember that things around us are and always have been neutral. They only become positive or negative based on how we judge them to be. Something we deem negative may be welcomed by someone or a passing moment of difference to another.

What Can You Do?

We must look forward to the future with a neutral if not positive disposition. Marcus Aurelius had a strategy to dealing his day to day activities. He always anticipated that later in the day he would meet someone who was angry, stressed, or even annoying. He also hoped to deal with them not in kind, but in a positive way. He reflects on the fact these people are only acting the way they do based on how they have interacted with life.

This is how we should look at our future. We should expect that everything is uncertain. All we can do is hope we respond as positively as we can on the whatever events will come our way.

Self-Discipline and Significance

There is a Japanese Proverb that says, "Fall down seven times, stand up eight." It's basically a reminder to be resilient. Adversities will come your way throughout life. Acknowledging this fact goes a long way in being resilient.

But have you ever known someone (possibly you) who seems to have fall after fall? Are they just that unlucky? Doubtful. More often than not it's a matter of not paying attention to the details.

Your relationship is heading down the tubes. Is it because you or your significant other has suddenly changed, or were there signs, hundreds of

little signs, along the way of little things that could have been fixed... but you thought they weren't that important.

You just got passed up for a promotion. Is it because the boss doesn't like you, or that you let little things slip along the way or didn't go above and beyond to improve your skill-set... because it just wasn't that important. I will tell you from the standpoint of a boss, everything is important. Bosses don't want players. They want performers.

Your business is struggling (or at least not performing the way you want). Is it because the market has turned against you, or that you didn't continually adapt with the times... because studying the leaders in your industry who are thriving to see what they do isn't very important.

When we look to improve ourselves or our lives, rarely is it something major that we need to do. We fall down because we lack the self-discipline to do the little things that add up.

How often do you pass up the opportunity to tell your significant other how important they are to you, because you assume they don't need to be reminded... until the divorce papers arrive.

How often do you do just enough to keep your job, assuming you'll get the promotion because the boss likes you... until the company downsizes and the boss fires everyone who isn't a performer.

How often do you look at the top leaders in your industry and say to yourself, "I sure wish I were them." But you never find out what their daily routines are that made them the industry leaders... and the market decided it no longer needed your business.

The "secret" to success in any area of your life is self-discipline. The areas of your life that go most smoothly are the areas where you show the most self-discipline. The places you struggle most are places where you lack the most self-discipline. And the places where you fall down are the places where self-discipline has been lacking for a long time.

Is self-discipline easy? Not for the first 40 days (according to the latest research it takes over a month of consistent-daily action to create habits), but it's way easier than repeatedly standing back up (oftentimes slightly behind where you fell down).

Here's the real key: Success is measured in degrees of self-discipline. You can't have one without the other. It's just that simple. Your life gets better when you get better.

Self-Discipline Through Exercise for Personal Development

If you're trying to stick to an exercise routine, focus on your workout as an opportunity to improve your ability to discipline yourself. Use the tips below for using your workout routine as one way to incorporate self-discipline into your life and achieve positive personal development.

If you're not working-out as much as you'd like to, or if you've stopped exercising for some reason, start exercising again. It doesn't matter what you do on the first day of jump starting your exercise routine, simply set aside the time for exercise and spend that time doing some physical exercise whether it's taking a walk or going to the gym.

Do not include activities that are physical but have other primary purposes as part of your exercise routine. For instance, if you clean the house, do not consider that activity as getting your workout for the day.

Add workouts to your routine to better achieve your health goals. For instance, if you lift weights or do crunches to make your body look good, consider whether you'd like to include cardio as part of your workout routine.

Avoid eating more when you feel hungry after exercise in order to maximize your ability to achieve and maintain weight management goals. Simply because you're exercising you should not have to increase your calorie intake unless you are strenuously training for hours a day.

Prioritize training in order to maximize your potential for self-discipline. You can easily determine whether you've prioritized activity by considering

whether you tend to skip on busy days. Consider activities that you don't skip even on your busiest days such as eating or watching television, and deliberately prioritize exercise as one of those activities you do regardless of how busy you are.

Use the routine you establish for exercise as a means of creating a routine for using your self-discipline to accomplish additional goals. For instance, once you've experienced the practice of self-discipline by sticking with an training routine, try instituting the same practice for cleaning your house or paying your bills.

Include your routine in your conversation to help maintain your motivation. Communicating your commitment to self-discipline through exercise can also engage others trying to incorporate a routine of their own. You can also learn from others how they've helped themselves to stick with their program.

Try to add five minutes of training to your exercise routine every few months. By gradually increasing your time you'll improve the health benefits you achieve from exercise while enhancing your ability to discipline yourself.

Listen to what you say to others about what your doing and avoid speaking of it negatively. While many people exercise, there are also those who mutter and complain about it. Instead of complaining, you should practice speaking positively about your exercise routine as part of your approach to supporting your efforts at self-discipline.

Self-discipline can be an important part of personal development by helping you to maximize your ability to achieve specific goals. Use the tips above to use exercise as a means of training yourself to incorporate self-discipline into your approach for self-improvement.

Discipline, The First Step To Overeating Treatments

Overeating is slowly becoming the biggest problem that people face today. There are at least 8 million Americans who are undergoing the impulse to eat more than they are used to or more than they should. This statistic

concerning binge eating is very alarming and most adults are prey to this disorder. There are a lot of actions being taken nowadays to create overeating treatments that can put this fatal disorder on hold.

Still, even if you have instilled the help of all the professional and health experts, it would all still boil down to the amount of discipline you can apply against your excess food intake. When people over eat, they don't stop to think whether they are full and they don't give thought to what they are eating. This makes treating a person's overeating a bit difficult because a person has to let go of what he or she usually ingests.

Overcoming binge eating is important given the fact that it will really take its toll on the body. Gaining weight or even losing weight, if done in the extreme is never a good thing. Overeating treatments, although it doesn't target the see-saw weight gain and loss, can of course prevent this unstable onslaught to the body. If you are in the middle of an obsessive food binge, try these three treatments that will help you overcome the disorder.

It might sound ridiculous or absurd but one of the overeating treatments around is hypnosis or hypnotherapy where professionals practice the art of hypnotizing their clients to change their minds and how they think.

Binge eating is related and closely connected to the psychological imbalance of a person and the way he or she perceives his or her self. To really get rid of the disorder, you have to get down to the root and curing it. Unconsciously nudging the thoughts of people to the right direction can help.

Another one of the easy overeating treatments that you can use is to replace all the food in your pantry and refrigerator with food high in nutrients and vitamins. Try to throw out the junk food littering your pantry and toss out the soda for extra measure.

The best thing you can do, if you cannot stop over eating, is to eat much of the good stuff rather than the bad ones. Also, try to distract yourself from the thought of having to eat food especially when you have just eaten! After all, discipline is one of best overeating treatments to binge eating.

Conclusion: The Modern Applications of Stoicism

The modern times are chaotic and the problems we deal today are much more frequent than the problems back in the ancient times. We are surrounded by things that cause us stress every day. However, that does not mean we should let those things affect and define how we live our lives. A way for us to deal with these events is to live by the principles of Stoicism.

Whether you want to make your life easier, instill self-discipline or are looking to find happiness, the principles of Stoicism can guide you there. We hope this book will help you get started on that journey and serve as your springboard for you to live better. Live with a better perspective and a more positive outlook to life.

-- Logan Hawkins

Dear Reader,

Thanks for exploring this book with me. Now that you know how to apply stoicism to achieve self discipline…

…why not take one step further and learn how to beat procrastination?

You'll love the other book on self discipline, because it complements this one.

Get it now.

Thanks,

Logan

P.S. Reviews are like giving a warm hug to your favorite author. We love hugs.

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07WPLWVP9

BOOK THREE

The 7-Day Self Discipline Blueprint

Habit Stacking for Beginners

Book 3 of the Self Discipline Series

Logan Hawkins

Introduction: Habit Stacking

Take a look around the people you encounter and work with on a daily basis. Some of them seem to breeze through the day getting an enormous amount of work done. Meanwhile, there are those who, even with just a single task, struggle so much that in the end, they aren't able to finish what's asked of them. Many of these procrastinators convince themselves they have perfectly good reasons for the delays in their deadlines and in getting their work done. More surprisingly, they are not self-aware of this behavior most of time!

While this is something that may be hard to comprehend for those who are so used to getting things done, it can happen even to the best of us. If you do, however, catch yourself in the process of procrastinating over something, then you would have gotten one step ahead. Recognizing this lapse helps you take action and motivate you to push yourself.

An occasional slip-up may be forgivable, but if you're chronically procrastinating, then you may need to improve your self-discipline through a series of habit-stacking techniques. This book will help you build up a plan that simply requires you to make a list of things you do every day, as well as develop the "can-do" attitude of an achiever, and remain consistent in applying this principle not just to your work life, but in all aspects of it.

Those who are able to figure this out and are already practicing it tend to enjoy their time more. They can fulfill their dreams more often than those who do not. So, if you want to do the same, read on to discover the step-by-step process on how you too, can build up self-discipline and enjoy the benefits of a positive habit-stacking strategy in your life.

This book will greatly improve your productivity, which can have a domino effect on your time, effort, and even on your happiness. Each process is done on a daily basis, focusing on one step for each day of the week, which will culminate in the hope you will be able to practice habit-stacking on a regular basis.

Chapter 1: Monday - Understanding the Way of Habit Stacking

What exactly is habit stacking? What does it entail? Simply put, habit stacking is a way of making minute adjustments to your life with the end goal of being able to achieve and finish certain tasks you have already set for yourself. With this, you can allow yourself to make small changes that are much easier to manage so you can take smaller steps towards achieving things that may have seemed impossible if you try to do them all at once.

Whether we have bad habits we want to get rid of entirely, or we just simply want to be better workers or better persons, the attempt to eliminate these habits requires a slow, constant process. The term “cold turkey” refers to suddenly quitting something, whether a habit or an addiction, and is often not the most effective way to do habit-stacking. When you stop doing things abruptly, you may lose focus and have certain cravings or “withdrawal” behaviors that will eventually make you lose focus.

On the flip side, habit stacking, through small consistent steps, helps ensure you can be able to build a new life habit. This is because habits currently practiced on a regular basis tend to have stronger roots within ourselves. Just like how buildings need a proper foundation, a strong root helps see you through any situation regardless of how tempting it may be to go back to your old ways, to procrastinate, or to perform undesirable actions. By

starting to build a new habit on a powerful existing foundation, part of the job is already done for you. You will have already completed the hard part and stay one step ahead.

So, how does the principle of habit stacking actually work? To help you give a better understanding, here are several examples that will paint you a better picture:

- ✓ If you want to develop the habitual attitude of being grateful, try to make sure you give a statement of thanks and gratitude at a time you are already engaged in a regular or habitual behavior. In this case, you may say a word or phrase of thanks each time you sit down for a meal, for example.

- ✓ If you want to make a habit of bringing lunch to work instead of buying and eating out, begin to place your phone near your ready-made lunch the night before. This will remind you to bring your food the next day because you make something a part of an action you already habitually do on a regular basis, such as bringing your phone to work.

Through a series of small changes, our habits can be changed. Even more so when we place these things around the practices we already do regularly. An established, level ground shows you progress over time, instead of making a new habit that fades away like the morning fog. Mini habits make it possible for us to implement changes that are less noticeable to others, but all add up to bigger aspects in our lives where we want to establish change.

For example, if you want to start a new habit of reading, you can begin by finishing a page or two daily. These small changes when done consistently will add up to the big change of you being in the habit of reading. The same goes for exercise. While the thought of doing exercise may seem daunting and overwhelming, you can begin with simple steps such as a brisk walk for 10 minutes daily, then progress later on to 15 minutes, then 20, then go from brisk walk to a light run, whichever works for you. The goal is simply to be consistent with small habits until it becomes easily a part of your daily routine and you find yourself doing these things without a thought to it.

The success of habit stacking lies in being patient with yourself, knowing that you are setting the foundation for the road to success with ease. It's not about getting results overnight. Rather than force them to happen in their entirety, you allow new habits to take root slowly and gradually.

Thus, the first step in building up a habit – any habit – is to know the way of habit stacking. Without a proper grasp on how habit stacking works, you will not be able to effectively make the changes you desire. Whether you acknowledge it or not, we are all creatures of habit. The difficult part comes when you try to add new habits into your daily life, career, and other areas.

You will want to sit down and think of your goals. Then think of the ways you should do in order to reach those goals. Once you have these listed out, you need to dedicate at least a small portion of your time in a day to insert these activities. These tiny goals easily slip through the cracks amidst our daily lives, but a conscious effort and a good understanding of the long-term effects of habit stacking will keep you in the path.

To quote Aristotle, "we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." This couldn't be farther from the truth. Habit stacking allows us to create strong connections by building routines that require little or no effort. It works on the premise that small wins are needed to build up the momentum because in the end, these tasks are quite easy to remember and complete.

It also involves grouping together small activities that will eventually make a routine. It also becomes memorable when you anchor these activities to an already established habit in your daily life. So why does this strategy work? Because it eliminates procrastination by incorporating a practical routine around the things you would otherwise put off. It increases the chance of a new habit to be successfully implemented.

Research shows that in order to develop a habit, you just need to do it consistently over a span of 21 – 40 days. So what may look like an unachievable jumbled up list of tasks to do will eventually makes sense and fit into the bigger picture in the long run.

In order to jumpstart habit stacking into your daily life, you can use the template below to find a habit you already do every single day and then stack another new habit on top of it:

"After (current habit), I will (new habit)."

Here are some examples:

- ✓ After I shower, I will take time to meditate.
- ✓ After I get into my car, I will do some breathing exercises.
- ✓ After I get home from work, I will do 5 push-ups.
- ✓ After an hour of sitting at work, I will stand up and stretch my legs.
- ✓ Before I go to sleep, I will list down the things I will have to do the next day.

9 Healthy Habits That Could Save Your Life

In fact, it's been estimated that more than 90% of health problems that bring people into the doctor's office are stress-related! But while virtually all of us could benefit from adding healthy habits to our lifestyle, it's harder to begin a new habit than it seems, especially when you're already over scheduled and overstressed! The following steps can help you begin to walk down a new path.

1. Get Outside. Oxygen is the most important nutrient the body needs. Now that spring is arriving, get outside and get moving. Walking is a great way to get in shape as well as relieve stress.

2. Get enough sleep. People who sleep fewer than seven hours a night are nearly three times as likely to get a cold than people who average eight or more hours of sleep, a study shows.

3. Keep it in moderation. Moderation is a good thing when it comes to our lives. Many people over indulge particularly in food consumption.

4. Build your self esteem. Self esteem is tied to many areas of our lives. How you feel about yourself determines how well you take care of yourself. Dr. Alan Zimmerman has a quote that I love that reads "if you truly love yourself, in a non-arrogant way, than you will never expose your mind or body to negative things." Constant negative thoughts or situations will slowly erode your sense of self worth. Strive hard to consistently fill your life with positive reinforcements.

5. Spend time with those you love. As I have begun to write on a larger scale the critics and the supporters have gotten louder. Instead of spending time justifying my work to the critics, I go play with my kids. Find excuses to spend more time with your spouse or kids. Never put work before your family! You will regret it later.

6. Put yourself first. Men sometimes do this too well, but women don't do this enough. Mothers particularly do a lot around the house. They clean, cook and coordinate multiple activities. Moms rarely put their lives first. Here's the principle I teach; when you fly on a plane the stewardess makes a statement that "if you have kids, and the cabin loses pressure, make sure you put on your oxygen mask first." Obviously this is so you don't pass out and be no help to anyone. Moms should think this way more often when it comes to their health. If a mother does not take the time to "put herself first" the entire family will suffer later.

7. Turn off the TV. 7pm to 11pm is considered "prime time." Use this time wisely, it can be time to read, or read to the kids, take a walk or work on a project you have been putting off. Television is a huge waste of time. Time is a huge issue to address if you want balance in your life.

8. Stay away from processed foods. Many processed foods are made with trans fats, saturated fats, and large amounts of sodium and sugar. These types of foods should be avoided, or at least eaten sparingly.

9. Drink plenty of water. It's generally not a good idea to use thirst alone as a guide for when to drink. By the time you become thirsty, it's possible to

already be slightly dehydrated. Use a glass when possible and keep a bottle close at all times. Water consumption varies depending on exercise, illness or temperature. The rule of thumb is at least 64 oz. a day.

We are creatures of habit. Sometimes the habits we create can cause more harm than good. The trick to making a lasting change is to understand that in order to change a bad habit, you have to replace it with a good habit. People often ask me how I became successful in the five-year period of time while many of the people I knew did not. The answer is simple: The things I found to be easy to do, they found to be easy not to do. Don't let neglect stack up on you. Neglect is like an infection, it will keep getting worse. You can start now by spending some quality time with your family.

Improving Memory Retention Through Healthy Habits

Many people just assume great memory is something that just happens naturally. It is true that some people may naturally retain certain thoughts and have the ability to remember information easier than others. However, improving memory retention through healthy habits can often excel you to a "gifted" persons level in little to no time at all.

If you weren't born with a great memory, that's alright. I wasn't either. These days, after some practice, it's become much easier to retain larger and larger amounts of information. Maybe you just want to be able to remember simple things, such as where you left your keys, or what bills you need to get paid when. Whatever your reasons for improving memory retention are, these healthy habits will make it much easier.

Exercise

Simply put, exercise does wonders for your memory. In order for your brain to retain information, it has to be in a healthy state. Not to sound cliche, but being in a healthy state of mind can mean multiple things. Regular exercise will increase blood flow and oxygen saturation within the brain. This will naturally lead to improved memory and an overall well being state of mind.

Exercise is great for many reasons, but regarding the topic of memory, it's vitally important. You don't have to work yourself out to exhaustion, but a

good 15-20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise will help tremendously.

Adequate Sleep

Maintaining a healthy sleep pattern is vitally important for improving memory retention. I cringe every time I think about how many times I pulled over nighters studying for college exams. I can remember going through chapters and chapters of biology and psychology books trying to cram as much as I could before I went in for the exam. I would usually only leave an hour or two at most of sleep.

Somehow, I always managed to do "alright," but the foggy head I would experience during the test was definitely a clue I would do much better with a little bit of sleep.

This applies to everyday life as well. If you have poor memory and you feel tired during the day, you could very well be depriving your body and mind of well needed sleep. Sometimes 30 minutes to an hour is all you need to get your mind the amount of rest it needs to improve your memory.

Diet

Often overlooked, your diet can contribute heavily to improving memory retention. I won't drag out a long paragraph about how you should have this and that regarding your diet. However, it's important to keep your diet balanced.

Have you ever talked to someone that's dieting hardcore? A familiar instance is recalled when I attempted to do a "low carb" diet. Many people who deprive themselves of certain nutrients, protein, carbohydrates, or any other part of a healthy and balanced diet often get a cloudy mind. Ask anyone whose ever successfully been on a low carb diet for a decent amount of time.

This topic can go off tangent very easily so I'll bring it back in and just suggest you keep your diet balanced and supplemented with your normal vitamin stack.

Following these tips for improving memory retention will definitely get you on the right track for remembering all the things you never thought you could! Trust me, it's much easier to remember just about anything when your body and mind are healthy.

Business Habits

I was listening to a CD the other day and they were talking about what the guy who wrote the best-selling book, *Body for Life* , Bill Phillips said was the most important meal of the day.

He said it's the first one.

Why?

It all boils down to this.

If you start your day the right way... doing the right things...

Then you don't want to stuff it up.

Over the Christmas period I stacked on a pound or two. And it kind of started like this...

I'll just have one chocolate. And then I thought, I've had one, may as well have another.

And then it was...

I'm on holidays, why not lash out. There's no time like the present.

I think you get what I mean.

My point is when you start the day doing something which isn't good for you, your standards drop and it all goes downhill from there.

And it's the same with your business.

Which is why it's important to start the day doing the MOST productive things first...

Do your planning for the day.

Do your marketing.

Do stuff which will make the dollars roll in.

And build some momentum.

Then when you think about wasting time on busy work or whatever, your mind will kick in and say you don't want to stuff things up as you are doing so well.

Think of unproductive work habits as eating junk food.

Each little thing you do may not hurt you that much.

But just like junk food will eventually go to your stomach, hips or thighs...

Bad work habits will eventually shave dollars off your bank balance.

And the best way to set up good work habits is to ritualise what you do every single day.

And then do it consistently.

Education should most certainly be a part of that.

Which is why you might want to get a hold of my advertising manual.

Just 15 minutes every morning and within a month you'll know more than 98% of your competitors about the art of turning words into dollars.

Working Moms - Four Small Habits That Have BIG Impact on a Working Mom's Life

As a working mom, stress, problems and chaos seem to just be part of life. The key to decreasing those things so you can better manage and enjoy life with a career and kids is in implementing habits and routines that eliminate some of the decision making and clutter (both physically and mentally) so you can focus on the things that matter to you most, like being present and productive at both work and home.

The following habits are not just ideas I am throwing out there hoping they may help. Nope, these are in fact four habits I have integrated into my own life since having kids and have personally experienced the benefits of doing each of them on a regular basis.

It dawned on me the other morning as I took a step back after making my bed-a one-minute habit that I've only been doing on a daily basis for the past six months or so-that there are a number of habits such as this that really don't take that much time, but impact my sanity and my success as a working mom.

Habit 1: Make your bed each morning.

As I already said, this is a habit I started within the past year that takes me less then a minute to complete, but leaves me feeling good all day long. I love seeing the bed made. I love walking by or into my room and seeing the smooth surface of the quilt and the pillows stacked up neatly. It amazes me how satisfying such a simple change in my life makes me feel. I don't even remember when I started doing it or why, but it's become a habit that has such a positive impact on my physical, emotional and mental "space."

I've also noticed that because it's become a habit for me, it's also become a habit for my husband. I never directly asked him to do it (although I am a big advocate of being direct with your husband when you do want him to do something), but have commented on how good it makes me feel and how easy it is to do several times in front of him. As a result, on the weekends when he gets up after me, I often find that he has made the bed as well.

Habit 2: Clean kitchen each night.

I will admit this is a habit I learned from my husband. I often could find 50 different reasons (okay, excuses) to wait to do the dishes and clean the kitchen until the next morning. Although it would perhaps feel better in the moment, because I could go relax or do something else more fun, I hated walking into the kitchen in the morning to the stack of dishes and mess. Not to mention it would take me twice as long to clean because at this point the food was dried on and more scrubbing was required.

Now, even when I am at my most tired, the dishes get done and the kitchen is clean every night-most often completed right after dinner and before we do anything else (we've learned the hard way how much more challenging it is to do the dishes after you've been lounging on the couch with a glass of wine watching 30 Rock).

I will also say that doing the dishes is not my responsibility alone. The rule in our house (which there is very little exception to) is that whoever cooks, the other person cleans. This is a division of labor agreement that works well for us, but that's a topic for another day!

Habit 3: Get a shoe rack and use it!

This is actually a new one for our family, but let me tell you how happy it makes me. I don't know about your kids, but mine had the bad habit of taking their shoes off right when they walked in the front door and leaving them in the middle of the floor. Some days they would attempt to get them under the hall table and out of the way, but often it took me asking them to come back and move them (repeatedly). Not only did I feel like a nag, but I hated the way the pile of shoes looked even when they did manage to get them out of the way.

Who knew that a $25.00 shoe rack from IKEA could look so good and bring not only myself, but my kids, so much joy?

The new rule is when shoes come off in the hallway they must go on the shoe rack. If there is no room for your shoes, then that means it's time to put some shoes away in your bedroom. My kids have needed very minimal reminders about this rule, as they love lining up their shoes as soon as they take them off.

The other nice thing is the rack is attractive and the shoes lined up look, well, fine. This has saved me from feeling the need to have all the shoes removed before company comes over. Instead, I notice that people come in and comment on the rack and then take off their shoes to add to it!

Habit 4: Shower and dress before the kids get up.

One of the benefits of having my own business and having my office just steps down the hall is that I have the ability to shower (or not shower) whenever I want. In the past, I use to think waiting to shower until later in the day was a luxury.

However, I came to realize this was less of a luxury and more of a stress inducer. Because I hadn't showered, that most often meant I also hadn't dressed before the kids woke up. Therefore, as I was helping them get ready for school (getting dressed, making breakfast, doing hair, etc.), I was also trying to get myself ready enough to get out the door in a semi-presentable way. I found myself running between task, each half-way completed, annoyed with the kids' constant need of my help and then rushed at the last minute as the kids waited for me to be ready to get in the car.

Well, all that has changed. I now shower and dress for the day before the kids wake up.

Whether you work in an office outside the home or in the home, I strongly encourage you to do what you can to have yourself as ready for the day as possible before the kids get up. The 30-40 minutes of sleep I am giving up to shower and dress before the kids wake up is worth the ease and sanity it brings me in the mornings now. When the kids do wake up, I am able to focus on helping them get ready. It all goes much smoother and faster then when I was trying to do it while getting myself ready.

Not only am I happier, but the kids are too. They've actually commented more then once about how much they like it when I sit down with them for breakfast, as opposed to the days when I would scurry in and out of the room as they ate.

Relatively small changes in behavior can lead to big changes in your overall sanity and satisfaction. Usually it's the small changes that are easier to implement, stick long-term and can make a big difference in your life.

When you are a busy, working mom serving as a leader at both home and work, you must learn how to work smarter, not harder. You already work hard enough as is. Try implementing even just one of these new habits into your own life (or come up with a different one) and experience the benefits in your own life.

The Habit Curve: The Way to Make a New Habit Stick in Your Fitness

How do you stay on track so you can achieve your fitness goals?

How do you guarantee that whatever fitness goal you set for yourself this year, you're going to stay the course and consequently get the body you want?

Whether you've decided this is the year that you lose that excess 10-15 lbs and keep it off.

Or you're going to take care of your health and nutrition by eating healthy.

Or you want to get super lean and shredded by hitting the gym.

Or you just want to have more energy, fitness and stamina and you want to start running in morning again. (or for the first time)

These are all goals that require repeatable actions and rituals. You need to have some powerful actions you do regularly enough to see real results.

You know it and and you've probably tried and failed to stick to your fitness goal in the past. It happens to all of us from time to time. You start on your journey to be this new way that will get you there but then life gets in the way, the enthusiasm and initial motivation wears off or you run out of willpower.

The 1 key to achieve your health and fitness goals isn't more determination or stronger willpower. Its having a powerful habit that is so strong that once

set, your actions towards cultivating your dream body becomes automatic and inevitable.

Here's where most people fail in setting and achieving a fitness goal that sticks.

They rely on raw willpower alone.

Here's the thing you need to know about willpower and why it fails to keep you on track.

You only get a little bit of willpower each day. Its actually been proven that willpower is something real and measurable. It turns out that your willpower and your level of self-control varies on the amount of blood glucose in a certain region of your brain AND it depletes throughout your day.

What that means is that everything... absolutely everything that you do, think about, focus on and have to make a decision about actually depletes your willpower.

Using raw willpower to install a new and empowering habit is a losing battle.

So, how do you set a fitness habit that sticks?

First, you have to know that setting a habit that will last and automatically bring you the fitness results you strive for is not an easy path. You will hit some walls. I want to share with you a model that illustrates the path to placing a strong habit into place for long-term success.

The habit curve

There are 4 phases on your journey to setting an unshakable habit.

Phase 1: Enthusiasm and optimism

You've just gotten committed to your new goal and the habit and behaviors that'll get you there and you're brimming with energy, excitement and

optimism. This is the best part because all that enthusiasm carries you through for the first week or so.

Phase 2: Enthusiasm crash

Now the novelty has worn off, the new behaviors are getting hard to sustain and it starts to feel really hard. This is where many people fall off the wagon. This is your first wall of the habit curve to overcome.

Phase 3: Active resistance

If you survive the enthusiasm crash and you stay the course, you now enter phase 3 which is the phase of active resistance. This is pretty much where the new habit is still a challenge but since you survived the enthusiasm crash, you have more resilience now. Stay strong here. If you survive this phase, you get to Phase 4.

Phase 4: Habit formation

After 21 days, you have a new habit. Once your there, you now have a programing that will guarantee your success to achieving your fitness goal.

The best part is the habit gets even easier the longer you do it. The more you do it, the deeper it hardwires into your system. 21 days is how long it takes to take hold, but it gets true strength at around the 50 day mark. So, stay the course.

How to survive the habit curve?

There are 2 walls you will face in the habit curve.

The first wall will be that enthusiasm crash.

The second wall will be surviving the active resistance phase.

The only thing that will make you fall off at either of those stages is your lack of follow through.

There are 3 reasons that can cause you to fall off the wagon.

1. You lose determination and willpower.

2. You have conflicting interests.

3. Life gets in the way.

While I touched on the first reason and why willpower will only get you so far, you will need some initial internal drive.

The second reason is a whole topic in itself but to keep it short, make sure you're willing to let go of old actions and behaviors that are no longer serving you if you’re serious about achieving your fitness goal.

The 3rd reason is a tough one to overcome.

The thing about what makes up your life and what fills it is what you're physically surrounded by.

If you have an environment that stops you from doing the things you need to, the odds are stacked against you.

If you don't have the space to exercise or...

If your schedule doesn't allow the time to get fit or...

If your surrounded by food that doesn't support your health and fitness goals or...

If your surrounded by people that don't exactly support your likelihood of following through...

All of that can be a problem.

Your environment has a huge impact on your behavior and when it comes to reaching your health and fitness goals successfully, you need to have physical conditions in your day to day life that actually encourages you to stick to your new actions and habits.

I call this the Power of Predisposition.

The Power of Predisposition (PoP) is a surefire way to increase your likelihood of following through with your actions and habits without having to will yourself into it. Without needing more determination or self-control. Its a way to guarantee that what you need to do get the body you want happens inevitably and automatically.

A predisposition is something like brushing your teeth everyday because you have your toothbrush and toothpaste in the same room of the house that you shower. The bathroom.

You can use PoP to increase the likelihood of you following through with your new health and fitness habits.

Let’s say you want to get back into running everyday. How can you do that so it happens automatically?

Instead of having to remember to do it and go out of your way to do it every single day, you can set up your life and your environment so it becomes automatic.

In the case of going jogging everyday, what would you need to have set up so it happens by itself?

Is there some running gear you need to have ready the night before so you can get right into it the next morning?

Is there a park on the way to or from where you work that you can stop for your daily run?

I'll use an example I use in my fitness. I have a spot where I like to exercise everyday around 5:30-6:00 pm. Its a spot just by the river. I go there every single day even when I don't feel like exercising. Some days I have less energy, less commitment and less willpower but I go there anyway. I've found that no matter how uncommitted I am that day, just going there increases my likelihood of exercising or working out.

Where in your life can you set things up so you're more predisposed to follow through?

How can you make your fitness habit inevitable and automatic?

If your trying to eat healthy, what kind of foods do you want to surround yourself with? What do you need to fill your fridge and pantry? What needs to come out of your fridge and pantry?

If you're trying to exercise daily to shed that 10-15 lbs, where can you go to workout without effort? What equipment or gear do you want to have around you to get the job done? Who can encourage you and maybe exercise with you? What physical objects can you have with you or around that just by looking it will inspire you to get fit?

If you want to survive the habit curve and get to day 21 and beyond, using the PoP will give you a significant edge at forging a powerful habit that sticks because if you make it inevitable and automatic, it becomes a habit which is by nature inevitable and automatic.

Chapter 2: Tuesday - SMART Goal Settings

Goal setting plays an important part in the success of habit stacking. In turn, goal setting should be deliberate and well planned out in order to expect positive outcomes. SMART goal setting is one such process that gives structure to your objectives and tracks your goals into play, instead of making unclear resolutions that do not seem attainable at best.

SMART goal settings help goals become reality because they ensure your plan is well thought out. Each letter stands for a specific portion of one's goal setting process. It needs to conform to the following criteria: S – Specific, M – Measurable, A – Attainable, R – Relevant, T – Timely. Let's take a look at each criterion closer.

<u>Specific</u>

While the outcome is a general picture, you will need to be specific in your description of exactly what you want to achieve. For example, there is a

stark contrast between saying, “I want to be rich” and “I want to earn $50,000 a month for the next three years by opening my own tech business.” Do you see the difference between these two statements? The first one is broad and does not exactly tell you what you want to achieve. The second one paints a much better picture on what you want and how to can achieve you dream. In making a goal that is specific, you may ask the following questions:

- ✓ What is it the specific thing I want to achieve?
- ✓ Why do I want to achieve this goal?
- ✓ How can I achieve it?
- ✓ Where do I go to achieve this?
- ✓ When will this achievement happen?

Measurable

When you place a quantitative property on your goal, you help define its physical manifestations to make it less obscure and easier to reach. If the goals can be felt, seen, touched, smelled, tasted, or heard, then all the better. A tangible and concrete evidence will greatly make it clearer for you to reach the goals you have set for yourself. When you say you resolve to be happier, that is a broad, unquantified statement.

What does happiness look or feel like to you? How do you know you’re happy? Set some parameters. You can say you will be happy when you find yourself being able to sleep a solid 8 hours at night, or go out with your spouse once a week, or being able to turn down workload to take home for the weekend. The parameters all depend on you, but they all have to contribute to the big goal of ultimately giving you lasting happiness, as the main goal that is set.

Attainable

Take a look and review your goal. Is it really acceptable to you? Or better yet, is it even feasible? Let's say you aim to increase profitability of your swimsuit business by 50% before the year ends, but you're fast approaching the winter season. Does your goal even make sense at this time?

A more attainable goal would be to set that profitability mark to the first half of next year, where you can capture your target more. Or if you don't have the time, won't put in the resources, or even exert effort, then your goal will just remain a goal. If you plan to aim for the stars, make sure you have the required skills, resources, training, or whatnot to be able to reach them.

Relevant

You want to expand your bakery business to selling cakes, but do actually have trained personnel to do the work? Do you have the equipment for the specific pastry items you want to sell? Or do you want to be famous, run a multi-billion-dollar business empire, have five children all under the age of 5, and be employed all at the same time?

All these seem impossible to do altogether because there's a certain lack of reality to these things. Ask yourself the main question of why you want to reach this goal. What is the objective behind it, and will you be really able to achieve that with the steps you plan to undertake?

Time-bound

Time is money and time that is wasted means money lost. So make deadlines and stick to them. They serve as prompts for you to start and keep the ball rolling so you can actually get something done. Keep yours and your team's timeline realistic, yet flexible.

If you've ever felt like you've been working very hard but haven't really gotten anywhere, chances are, you never applied SMART goal setting. By using the SMART method, you can clarify your ideas, which can help you focus on areas where your efforts are most needed. In turn, you will be using your time and resources wisely and productively, which can then help you achieve the very goals you have set for yourself in the beginning.

To get you started, you can use this template to write down your goals and set them down into a SMART way of goal setting:

My Goal: _____

S - Specific	✓ What do I want to accomplish? ✓ Why do I want to accomplish this? ✓ What do I need to do? ✓ What are my limitations?
M - Measurable	✓ How will I measure my progress? ✓ How will I know when the goals are met or accomplished?
A - Attainable	✓ How can the goal be accomplished? ✓ What are the logical steps I should take?
R - Relevant	✓ It is a worthwhile goal? ✓ Is this the right time? ✓ Do I have the necessary resources to accomplish this goal? ✓ In this goal in line with my long-term objectives?
T – Time Bound	✓ How long will it take me to accomplish these goals?

	✓ When is the completion of this goal due? ✓ When am I going to work on this goal?

Take Control Of Life With Smart Goal Setting

Some highly successful people have been able to take control of life and get what they want without setting any goals - or so they say. They may not have sat down and followed a formal process, but in their minds they knew what they wanted. While this does work, it is not smart goal setting. This is too random and leaves too much to chance - not the best way to take control of life.

Enough research has been done to show that the people who have written objectives and a structured approach do better than those who have none. There are tried and proven methods to goal setting and the first and most important step to successful goal setting is to define what you want.

Put Your Objectives In Writing

This is probably the most important action you can take. This makes you come to grips with the reality of what you want and what you are trying to achieve. When you start writing down your goals you will soon see the difference between real goals and dreams. Of course, you need to have dreams in the first place otherwise you will not be inspired or motivated. But the dreams only become realistic goals when you can make them part of a practical plan.

Are They Realistic?

For example, one of your dreams might be to have a 4-bedroom house by the ocean. This will only be a dream until you can make some concrete steps to achieving it. You will need to do some research and check if it is feasible. How much will it cost? Will you need to borrow money? If so, do you have the assets to secure a loan and do you have the income to service it?

Once you do your homework you might find that a house by the ocean may not be a realistic goal at this time. On the other hand, in doing the exercise you may find you could get close to what you want with a little compromise or you may find it is achievable over a longer time frame. This dream then becomes a goal and you can start working towards it. You now have a realistic goal and a time frame. But you could find it is not a realistic goal and you will be better off using your energy going after something you can achieve.

Apply The Process To All Your Goals

This is part of a smart goal setting process and you can apply it to all your goals: write them down to separate the real goals from the dreams; check their feasibility; think about what you have to do or what you will need to achieve them; give yourself a realistic time frame to reach your goals; take action by making positive steps to set you on your way.

Putting your objectives in writing does crystallize them in your mind. Your mind can visualize definite, clear images rather than fuzzy, grey pictures. Give your sub-conscious mind clear, strong images and then feed it with positive self-talk backed-up by positive action. This will help you take control of life and set you on your way to getting what you want.

Smart Goal Setting - Why Set Goals?

SMART goal setting is a very important factor that contributes to the success of an individual. A list of goals reflects the personality of the goal setter and how he wants to improve as a person.

It is very important to remember and apply the smart guidelines of effectively setting goals. Goals should be very specific enough that you're able to clearly envision them; measurable to keep you motivated; and achievable and realistic so you won't ever think of quitting just because you can't do it. Time is also an important element as this gives you the energy and motivation to start taking action.

You may probably ask why there's a need for you to learn to apply these smart elements when setting your goals. Doing it effectively brings a lot

more benefit than you can ever imagine. If you're a new goal setter, you may focus more on how to effectively set your goals and may not think about the great benefits of goal setting yet. However, knowing the benefits is as important as creating them effectively.

Here are some benefits that you can get from goal setting:

- You're bound to achieve not just the things you want in life, but more.

- You have a higher level of confidence and you tend to brave more things in life.

- You will feel more satisfied with your work.

- If you are an effective goal setter, you have this "can do" personality and you're basically not afraid to take risks and explore more things in life.

- If you are setting your goals, you are basically bringing out the best in you. Goals depend on what you want and what skills you have so it's really a reflection of how unique you really are.

- Smart goal setting keeps you away from any negative thoughts and help you focus more on the positive side.

- Having goals also help you make better decisions in life.

- Setting goals means envisioning and living a life that you really want.

- You also become more successful in every performance that you make throughout your life.

- Goals that are achieved serve as great motivations for you to explore and discover more things in life.

By effectively setting your goals, you are making the very first important step to contentment and success in life. Continue to be guided by these principles and you'll find your way living the life that you thought would only be part of a dream and almost impossible to come true.

Top Ten Tips on Smart Goal Setting

Who does not want to know the keys to success especially when nothing seems to work out? When self confidence seems to cut down and you feel frustrated at work and can't figure out how to manage a career? Then it is very important for you to know being successful can only be achieved if you abide by certain aspects methodologically and follow the pattern diligently so you never have to face what is making your life go almost haywire.

Human beings often drift away of their once made goals or work charts, but in order to attain success in any field setting goals are essential for you to set up your own work routine and make a list of what you want to accomplish. Here are top ten tips on smart goal setting that will help you choose the way.

Top ten tips for you

1- Realize your potential - You know best what will work out for you, so set your goals according to what you think is right and not what others feel.

2- Promise yourself - When you are keen on setting smart goals make a promise you are going to abide by them no matter what.

3- Change your schedules - If you are wondering how to set goals, then write them initially on paper and change your schedules when you feel its monotonous. Carry out this process and you will be habituated.

4- Formulate a time plan - This is very important as what you are doing and why you are doing such depends on it. Frame your prospects such as setting smart goals leads you to, when you know at what time you want to achieve your goals, where will you be then, if you would require any assistance or not. It is important to make such decisions as these top ten tips on smart goal setting will only take to action when you promise yourself.

5- Generate new ideas - Train your conscious mind to innovate and generate new ideas in order to make your promises intact and your goals on a smart plan.

6- Affirmative attitude - You have to assure yourself that what you have set for yourself shall work out. If required write what positive things you want in life on a white paper repeatedly every day.

7- Think of the outcome - When you set your goals you need to think of a positive outlook so that your dream of success makes a mark on your mind and motivates you.

8- Define your dedication - Do not vague your devotion to your goals, as this is a disciplined process where less concentration will not give you the fruit of success.

9- Remember what you want - Always remind yourself of what you want to achieve repeatedly in order to make that the modus operandi of your conscious mind.

10- Ten Tips on smart goal setting will only work out if you follow your mind for the right. Set your ambitions and abide the rules set by yourself.

Smart Goal Setting: Staying Motivated

Smart goal setting is a combination of setting the right goals, developing up a strong goal plan and measuring your success. While in theory this covers smart goal setting, there is one more element that can will either bring you success or failure; motivation.

Motivation, isn't always easy to come by, especially when you feel things are not working well. But, in order to achieve success you must stick at it. The seven tips below help you to stay motivated and keep you on track with your goals.

Remind yourself of why you want to achieve your goals: Whether it is motivational posters near your desks, photos, or other memorabilia you need to remind yourself why you want to achieve your dreams. If you know the desired outcome you will be much more likely to work harder.

Develop a strong plan: Smart goal setting comes down to having a strong plan in place. If you know exactly what you need to do, and by when, you

will have less stumbling blocks, and be more confident in working towards your goals.

Take breaks: All work and no play, won't just make you a dull person, it will affect your motivation. You need regular breaks to stay balanced and effective.

Small rewards: Rather than waiting for the big reward at the end of your tasks, break your overall dream down into different tasks, and reward yourself at the end of each of these. This will keep you highly motivated.

Relax: Don't get too stressed about things. Staying relaxed will keep you more effective and efficient and you will be happier. These three things combined are motivational.

Look after your health: If you are healthy, you will have more energy and be able to work harder towards your goals. So eat healthily, exercise regularly and try and get enough sleep (not always easy we know!)

Picture your goals complete: This works in the same was as positive affirmations. Picture your goals achieved and finished every day. This will help to make them happen.

Smart goal setting involves setting measurable, specific and relevant task; as well as having a strong plan in place. However, to be successful, you need to take action and constantly work day in and day out. To do this you need to be motivated. So follow the seven tips above and watch your dreams turn into reality.

Smart Goal Setting For Your Career

Smart goal setting involves writing down your aims and ambitions, reviewing them, setting a course of action and a timeframe and then getting down to the hard work. Irrespective of the amount of quality time on hand you may have, there is no doubt that to realize your aspirations and dreams, you need to set goals and work towards them. Smart goal setting for your career involves creating a list of short and long-term goals and identifying

ways to accomplish them. The generated goal list does not only motivate you, but also cements your aspirations.

Goal setting - reminders

Smart goals are reminders about the course of action that you need to take, as you walk to your work desk each morning. Your discussions for a raise or promotion are initiated on this sheet of paper. The realistic goals set and the time frame determined should be displayed in areas that you frequent through the course of the day.

It is important to note that keeping your goals realistic gives you a stronger chance to fulfill them. Keep your list of goals in places where you will be reminded of them every day. The list will automatically help you take even the smallest of steps in the direction of meeting those goals. Smart goal setting for your career within a timeframe

Goal setting should be designed within a time frame. Don't be vague. Tip the hat over the fence and give yourself dead lines. At the same time, give yourself ample of time to reach each of the targets. The timeframe should be such that it motivates you to look at taking on extra work, learning new skills, earning certifications and attending workshops and updated orientations within the industry. The time frame also enables you to understand and plan the steps needed to reach each of the goals. This gives you the scope to recognize opportunities and stay motivated.

Plan Ahead, revise and review

You should be able to plan ahead for each of the goals. You should identify the specific steps required to reach out to the different goals and write them down. This will help you to achieve the goals when and as, by taking the necessary steps. You should periodically revise your goals and segregate those met and those yet to be achieved. This will ensure that you remain enthusiastic about the exercise and stay excited, all through the course of action. Review the list of goals whenever possible and strike out the completed tasks. Make changes if necessary. Add new goals to pursue your dreams and passions with even more determination.

The goal setting exercises for a career involve a lot of identification with specific aims and ambitions. You cannot be scattered in thought and expect to walk towards a particular goal. The current level of competition and the scarcity of good candidates for top-notch positions have made goal setting even more important. Your career graph will attain the required altitude only with the right attitude. A methodical approach will ensure that your career graph is more focused and stream lined. Goal setting for a career move is the best way to make your work station a potential playground everyday!

Effective SMART Goal Setting For Better Time Management

Setting your goals in life can be very challenging especially if you don't have any clue about what you really want. We all have so many things that we want to achieve and so much stuff we want to do in our lifetime. However, we cannot achieve everything if we don't know how to set our goals right. Time is gold and we simply cannot just sit around and wait for things to happen.

Time management is an important factor in being successful in life. How we manage our time reflects the kind of person we are and how we deal with everything in this world. If you want to manage your time the correct way, you have to start by setting the right goals. You cannot just write down and follow any goals you want, as you need to have a standard in setting them. This is where SMART goal setting comes in.

SMART goal setting is a tested and proven method used by many in setting their goals in life. You too can apply it and become a better time manager. After all, if we want to manage our time well we have to start by setting the right goals.

Here's what effective SMART goal setting is about and how it can help you manage your time better:

Specific

In setting your goals you have to keep it as simple as possible. You have to be specific enough to clearly identify the goals you want to achieve in a

period of time. It will also help if you assess what you want; why you want it, and when do you want to have it.

Measurable

You must set goals which you can measure. It means that these should be goals wherein you can easily monitor your progress and see how far you have gone in reaching them. You must set some sort of criteria or basis to serve as an evaluation tool to determine whether you are successful or not.

Attainable

Attainable goals are those which you can possibly reach. Upon setting your goals, you must see to it that you are really capable of achieving them. Avoid those which you know are beyond your powers. You can do this by examining your capabilities and resources and analyze if they are enough to make you reach the goals.

Realistic

Are your goals doable? When you set your goals you have to be as realistic as possible. Remember you are only human and you have your limitations. Your goals must be based on what you can possibly do and not beyond what you are capable of. Be realistic if you want to see results.

Timely

Identify your short term goals and long term goals. Learn to prioritize by doing first things first. In addition, you have to make a timeframe for each goal so you don't just focus on working on one goal alone.

By following these practical steps on effective SMART goal setting for better time management, you are assured of becoming the best time manager you can be. Set your goals right to manage your time effectively by following the SMART goal setting. Doing so can help you become successful in your undertakings.

Smart Goal Setting: 3 Mistakes You Are Not Aware You Are Doing

Smart goal setting means strategizing. It means knowing the things required to meet goals; being familiar with the prerequisites and each step of each goal. It means having a good and effective plan and alternative plans. It also means knowing the pitfalls so one can avoid them.

In this content, you will find four mistakes to avoid. You will know you are into smart goal setting when you have identified and run over obstacles without stumbling.

1. Setting goals that are conflicting.

This is not realized or noticed by most people. Sometimes they tend to set goals that are contradicting. For instance, you aim to spend more time with the members of your family and you also aim to further your career which means you need to spend more time working. Such situation can get you stuck and stop you from reaching your goals. To prevent this from happening, you need to examine your goals and figure out which ones weigh more at the moment. Two conflicting goals can be equally important so consider urgency. Which one requires more immediate attention, and which one can wait for a while?

2. Another mistake most people commit but not notice is lack of action.

Not having actions is obviously a no-no in smart goal setting. However, the lack of work is not noticed at once but committed by most people. The lack of work is triggered by mediocrity. You work but it is just not enough. Too little work will not get you anywhere. It will not accomplish anything. You need to put much effort and enough actions in order to achieve your goals. Otherwise you will end up frustrated hoping you are giving your best, but actually giving less than what is required.

3. Another mistake is setting goals that are too easy.

Anything that is too easy to execute and accomplish, most of the time is not rewarding. You are missing the challenge in it. It is the challenge which is the gratifying factor. Make sure your goals are challenging enough to energize and thrill you. Otherwise, there are not a goal at all. When setting

challenging goals, you need to examine your strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills.

Base your goals on these aspects. Make sure your goals are not too easy or too difficult for you. Smart goal setting is definitely not about having too easy goals so it would also be very easy to achieve them. It is about reaching something you never thought you would reach, and challenging your abilities and capabilities.

Chapter 3: Wednesday – SMARTening Up Your Goals

For far too long, consultants, trainers, gurus and leaders have been misleading us about goal setting. We keep hearing the same myth that people with written goals achieve greater success in life. I fell afoul of this story myself - after all, it came from the pages of a famous author and I've seen it repeated again and again - most recently in an article published by the Professional Golfers Association. The trouble is this story becomes linked with the concept of setting SMART goals, for which there is some evidence, but written goals? So, I felt it was time to set the record a little straighter and based on just a little bit of real research...

Goal-setting is one of those things that people, it seems, are near unanimous on its importance to life, career, success, achievement. And there are a great many speakers who advocate goal-setting. The latest 'fad' in this is The Secret - Rhonda Byrne's now famous TV/Film Documentary which, in a nutshell, purports that people who envision what they want will attract its actualization into their life.

Now, I'm not going to detract from this appealing idea because there is something in it - but it isn't new by any means, it's been written in the Bible for several hundred years. There are others including Zig Ziglar and Anthony Robbins - both of whom quote an oft-used story about the effectiveness of goal-setting: This is the Yale Study of 1953 - some say it is Harvard, and some challenge the year - it matters not, since the study is an

urban myth. Let me remind you of the story, you may have heard variations and the precise percentages vary:

Yale researchers surveyed the graduating class of 1953 to determine how many of them have specific, written goals for their future. 3% of them had. Twenty years later, the researchers followed up with the surviving members of the class and discovered that the 3% with written goals had accumulated more personal wealth than the remaining 97% combined!

I repeat - this 'study' is an urban myth - whilst it is quoted by some 'authorities' and famous gurus on management and self-leadership, there is NO record of the study and NO paper on it. Yet its allure is understandable - it feeds beautifully into the concept that in order for you to accumulate wealth (aka be successful) not only must you have specific goals, but you must write them down. For someone selling a process on written goal setting (see Zig Ziglar and Tony Robbins) it 'proves' the process.

So is goal-setting really important, or is it just a load of twaddle? To answer this question, rather than rely on stories of spurious origin, it's important to have some robust research to find out if there's anything in it.

Hold on just a moment though, what do we mean by a 'goal'? Everyone at some point in their life has heard that it is important for us to have goals. Goals provide you a map to your future, whether in business, life, and career or indeed sport. It seems obvious, but a football team playing without a goal to aim for is just kicking a ball around. But, other than the more obvious physical goals as the target of a particular game, what exactly is a goal? And how do you know when you have achieved it? Is it even very important to have goals? A sporting goal is a useful analogy though; here we are more interested in the non-sporting variety.

The OED definition of a goal is "an aim or a desired result." That's useful, but I prefer the Wikipedia version which defines a goal as "a specific, intended result of strategy." They amount, ultimately to the same thing: the intended achievement of a desired result. The dictionary definition, however, suggests that the goal exists with or without you. Why is this important? I hear some question already. Let me share an example:

On the horizon is a mountain, its peak visible on this glorious day. It is your goal. You are aiming to reach the peak of this mountain. According to the dictionary the goal is the mountain peak. According to the encyclopedia, the intended result is that you reach the mountain peak as a result of the journey (intended strategy) you are making.

What's important, the existence of the goal or the journey to its attainment?

Let me refer briefly back to soccer... Is the existence of the goal at the end of the pitch the thing that makes the game, or is it the strategy (and tactics) employed by players to score (reach) the goal?

The reason for being pedantic at this stage is to stress that we refer (in English) to goal as both an entity and as the intended result of our actions. For the purposes of this article, I refer to goal as both - an entity that we are able to describe in one or more of the five senses we enjoy and as a specific, intended result. I believe that it is critical that a goal can be described in one or more of our senses - otherwise we will never know what it is.

"A man without a goal, you are like a ship without a rudder." Thomas Carlyle

You know people, perhaps yourself, who would be lost without a "To Do" list. Daily, weekly, monthly tasks that result in specific intended results. Many people will consider this as their goals. Indeed, you can call them 'goals' if you wish. But I want to distinguish this concept further. I call these daily, weekly, monthly tasks "Outcomes" - they are important steps on the way to achieving goals but they are a small part of the overall intended result.

I'll borrow from my own To Do list for today. It includes, strangely enough, writing the first three sections of this article. Now, is my goal to write three sections of an article? Is it to write an article? I can answer yes to both yet it doesn't tell us the full story - my Goal is to develop my business.

As a part of that, I want to reach a wider audience for the purpose of building my brand, building my reputation and establishing myself as a trusted expert who you will now consider to design and run a training

programme or undertake coaching in your organization. This article is just one part of that strategy, and this section, just one part of this article. The primary and secondary research I've undertaken to be in a position to write, I trust, knowledgeably about goal-setting has been another part... and so on.

It is the goal that helps us determine the appropriate outcomes necessary to reach the goal, the specific outcomes help determine the actions we undertake to achieve them. The whole series together, makes a strategy.

For ease and clarity, I consider a "Goal" to be longer-term and the intended result of a strategy. "Outcomes" are the result of the steps, milestones or activities that we achieve en-route to achieving the goal.

When I was a child, schoolteachers and relatives would often ask, "And what do you want to be when you grow up?" I honestly didn't have a clue. My friends seemed to have gotten the hang of this and I discovered the expected answers seemed to be focusing around jobs or careers "I want to be a Fireman/Doctor/Train Driver," or perhaps something bolder like "Rock Star/Famous Actor" - or around money... "I want to be a millionaire."

Apparently it didn't matter what you wanted to be - it still required that you studied hard, preferably got all A Grades - oh and it was critically important that you "eat all your greens." Quite how Brussels sprouts are a necessity for success has never been answered fully to my satisfaction. By the time I was a teenager, I was at the "I dunno" stage.

And by the time I was choosing my A level subjects it seemed my options were becoming limited. Artist was ruled out on the recommendation of my delightful art teacher who claimed that my lovingly crafted painting "hurt her eyes" and Author was ruled out because I had little taste for over-analyzing Jane Austin's *Northanger Abbey* .

To my knowledge, none of my friends answered "I wish to be a wage slave pushing paper from one side of a building to another, politically maneuvering myself into a position of power and authority, attending useless meetings each day and commute for 4 hours" so what went wrong?

Well, perhaps it is the goal-setting process.

Inadvertently, or deliberately, people asking us when young "what do you want to be..." have set us on a process of goal-setting. They are asking us to peer in our mind's eye into the distant future and describe our goal. With little worldly experience, we most likely think of people we admire that through their job demonstrate what is valuable to our young minds.

What would you like to achieve in X years that having achieved it will satisfy your personal values? Would you ask a ten year old that question? No? It's unlikely that they would understand - but with the massive leaps in education and increasing pressure on children to know a whole lot more than the current generation of mature adults, they may well be asking you that question and be surprised if you can't answer it. I digress, but we are effectively asking that when we say "what would you like to be..."

Goal-setting is a process by which we choose our intended result, decide what we want to achieve in the longer-term AND determine HOW we are going to attain the goal (i.e., the strategy). Therein lies the problem for many people in regard to goal-setting... the process necessarily includes the strategy to achieve the goal. When relatives with kind intentions ask "what do you want to be..." the strategy they advise to achieve whatever you said, invariably refers back to the need to study hard, be a good child, don't answer back and above all... "Eat your greens!"

As you get older, the advice may become more specific and even, more useful. You begin to discover which areas of knowledge and skill you most enjoy and are better equipped to clarify your personal goal as you become increasingly aware of what is important to you.

Goal-setting for your career, life and business is strongly advocated and endorsed in hundreds of books and papers and articles. Most emphasize the importance of writing your goals down as part of the goal-setting process.

Is goal-setting important?

Ask almost anyone about the importance of goal-setting and they will affirm that it is incredibly important. Here is a small selection of verbatim responses to the question "How important is goal-setting?"

"The difference between successful people [and people struggling] is the setting of tangible and measurable goals."

"I believe goal setting does work and needs to be written down. "

"If there are no set goals, things either happen, or they don't."

"With measurable goals you are in action to fulfill them"

"... there's no excuse for failing to progress if you don't take ownership of your own goals."

"Setting yourself some goals is always going to be effective."

"I have been setting goals for myself for over 10 years. I believe the goals enable me to achieve the things that I want."

"People who are successful tend to be the same sort that write down goals."

So there seems to be consensus that goal-setting is important, yet there is some evidence to support it, yet, as we shall see, from research undertaken for this study, having written the goal down is perhaps not the most important concern. What we will see is that the process of goal-setting is perhaps more important than the goal itself!

There is some strong support for the concept of SMART goals. Goals that are Specific and Stretching, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound. There's a great deal of common sense reasoning that supports the idea of SMART goals - and there's some excellent robust research.

Why set goals?

Edwin Lock and Gary Latham have undertaken a great deal of leading research about goals and goal-setting and neatly suggest that setting goals implies dissatisfaction with the current condition and a desire to attain an outcome Locke and Latham, 2006.

Why Specific and Stretching?

In Locke and Latham's 2006 study and previous articles, there is an emphasis on the positive relationship between goal difficulty and performance. Locke and Latham, 1990; Locke and Latham, 2002. That is, the more difficult the goal is to achieve, the higher the level of performance is manifest - albeit moderated by commitment to the goal. Earlier studies had already identified that specific and difficult goals led to greater performance than easy and/or vague goals Latham and Lee, 1986

Commitment to achieving a goal - Attainable and Realistic

Hollenbeck and Klein, 1987 suggest that an individual's commitment to a goal (building on Locke's research and many others) is dependent on a combination of the expectancy that the individual has of achieving success, and the difficulty of achieving the goal. In the commonly used mnemonic, SMART goals, this is usually considered as the 'AR' of SMART - Attainable and Realistic.

Though Hollenbeck and Klein help point out that when we set a goal, it may well seem that the goal is attainable - I can do everything I need to do to achieve this and am prepared for the cost in time, effort, etc. - and it may well seem to be realistic - Given the resources I have and the current environment, this goal can be practically achieved.

Measurable and Time-bound?

I don't think it would be possible to undertake research on something that had no measure nor a time restriction - how would you know you had achieved success if there was no measure, and if there is no time limit, when would you stop measuring or even not measuring. So these remain 'common sense' though a post-modernist might disagree.

So there is support for the concept of SMART goals - now why is it so important that we 'write' them down?

There are some who suggest that writing something down increases commitment to the goal but the evidence is anecdotal. For some individuals, the act of writing something down assists clarity through a conscious

process because they consider something written to be a personal commitment. Does that mean it is true for everyone?

To help answer this, we undertook primary research to mirror the mythical Yale Study. Through a simple questionnaire, respondents were asked if they had set goals for themself on leaving school, college or university, when this was and if they had written it down. They were then asked to estimate their total personal wealth now. The results are quite shocking.

Results from our survey

215 individuals completed the online questionnaire over a seven week period. Respondents were mostly UK-based (80%), with further respondents from Asia (11%) and the USA (9%). This researcher invited respondents through social networks, Ecademy and LinkedIn and direct contact with companies across the UK, Asia and US. 70% of respondents are in full-time employment and the remainder either self-employed or business owners.

Only results shown to be significant at 0.05 are discussed.

At the end of their formal education, 69.8% had a personal goal of whom only 11.2% had written their goal down.

Goals and personal wealth

Of those that had written their goal, their average personal wealth is GBP115000, whereas those who had not written their goal down, their average personal wealth was GBP295000. That's more than two and a half times as much! Completely contrary to the supposed Yale Study.

We asked respondents when they left formal education and analyzed this against their estimated personal wealth.

Those leaving formal education in the 1970s have an average wealth of GBP475000, 80s GBP195000 and 90s... GBP325000!

It seems reasonable that those who have been in the workforce longer would have greater personal wealth and so it is... almost. The anomaly appears to be those who left formal education during the 80s.

Those leaving in the 70s have generated on average 13,500 each year since leaving. 80s grads a miserly 7,800 and those bright young things from the 90s, a whopping 21,600!

So what's going on?

It may have something to do with SMART goals.

SMART goals and personal wealth

Those who set Specific Measurable only goals average a low 25,000

Add Time-bound to specific and measurable and this goes up to 50,000

Just Attainable and Realistic goals - now this is averaging 150,000

Specific, Measurable, realistic and time-bound and we rise rapidly to 475,000

Go the whole hog, Specific, measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound - and we reach 605,000

We seem to be finding some useful answers here. Don't worry so much about writing your goals down, just so long as they're SMART. So is that it? No. There's a couple of very interesting additional significant statistics in our survey. They deal with the type of goal.

Goal focus and personal wealth

Respondents were asked if they were willing to share their own personal goal, 60% did so and these break down into four main focuses: Career, Lifestyle, Money or Ability. We also asked how satisfied respondents were with their achievement.

For those with a Lifestyle goal focus, average wealth is 95,000 and 'satisfied' with their achievement.

A Career focus, average wealth is just over 100,000 and 'somewhat satisfied'

A Money focus, average wealth is 162,500 and 'satisfied' and lastly,

An 'Ability' focus, average wealth is 780,000 and 'very satisfied'!

Go on, have a guess on the statistical conclusion... yep; those who left formal education in the 90s focus more on 'Ability', 80's focus on career and lifestyle, whilst the 70s predominantly Money. Surely a reflection of the environment of the time.

The great thing about focusing on what you are 'able' to do will help the goal-setting process be more effective. Following Locke and Latham's findings that ability to achieve the goal moderates performance - too difficult and uncommitted individuals do not perform, whereas, stretching yet within my potential ability aids commitment to goal attainment.

Respondents were asked if they were willing to share their own personal goal, 60% did so and these break down into four main focuses: Career, Lifestyle, Money or Ability. We also asked how satisfied respondents were with their achievement. The first three are 'Outcome' goals - that is, they specify a particular tangible outcome. Ability focus is a 'Performance' goal - such goals focus on an ability or capability of the individual.

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Outcome goals - some issues

The problem facing many people with regard to 'Outcome' goals is that there is an element that is outside the power of the individual.

An example of the potential issues with an 'outcome' goal comes from a rather sad testimony from one particular research participant:

"My goal was to have $3 million in the bank for my retirement by age 55. I achieved my goal with great satisfaction early at age 43. Unfortunately my bank was at the centre of a fraud and went under. 16 years later, I am still working and slowly rebuilding my goal. So, goals are important and we need to know what we want to achieve in life - just choose a goal only including yourself and don't leave all of it in one place."

Outcome goals are most often subject to others and to the environment. The greater the attainability of a goal through yourself only - i.e. Your own performance - the more you are in control of goal achievement. Goals that have a high dependence on others and/or external circumstances are considerably more difficult to influence.

As an extreme example, one survey participant has goal to win the lottery! Now there are certain things that you can do to increase the likelihood of this becoming reality, buying tickets is a useful component, but how many? Interestingly, another participant who had a 'money' goal did indeed achieve their goal - through winning the lottery! Though that wasn't the original

plan and they rated themselves 'somewhat satisfied' in having completely achieved their goal.

Whilst touching on monetary goals, another participant reminds us that being specific about your goal is important: "My goal was to be a millionaire by 35... I achieved it the moment I stepped away from the foreign exchange counter at Jakarta airport!"

Following up with our survey participants revealed commonality in the way they went about setting goals and their subsequent actions to achieve their goals. We've already seen how those with the greatest success in terms of personal wealth had SMART goals. This isn't to say that success can only be measured by means of personal wealth at all - the original intention was simply to test the mythical Yale Study results.

And, of course, someone could have set themselves a perfectly good SMART goal - but due to their own environment, had not accumulated as much personal wealth in terms of a standard currency - indeed, a person could have less in terms of monetary wealth, yet be considerably better off in terms of the value they can obtain from less money.

Performance goals

An interesting aspect that began to show itself through the results was personal satisfaction in goal achievement. People who set 'Ability' type goals, or 'Performance' goals reported to be 'very satisfied' with their achievements - whether completely achieved goals or not yet complete. In part, this suggests the importance of personal values and suggests a question about the process by which they set goals.

Through a random selection of fifty respondents we found that there is some commonality in the manner in which goals are set:

When we compare the groups of 'Very Satisfied' with their achievement and 'Satisfied' or 'Somewhat Satisfied' with their achievement. The first group were more likely to have SMART goals. The goal is described in sensory terms - what will be seen, heard and felt, and for a small number, smelt and tasted. Respondents were clear about what achieving the goal will do

positively for them and the cost to themselves (and others) of achieving their goal. Their goal, they considered personally stretching yet 'knew' that they were capable of achieving it themselves. More than 60% stated their goal in the present tense - 'I am' rather than 'I will be'.

This provides a template for a useful goal-setting process that we've turned into an easy-to-remember acronym: SWING.

Now that you have put your plans into writing and translated them into SMART goals, it is time for you to get to work. All the desire in the world cannot help you achieve anything unless you get up and start taking action. Let’s say you desire to be a great swimmer and compete professionally in that field. But dreams will remain as dreams if you don’t take swimming lessons, practice consistently, and get mentorship from an expert.

You will need to wake up very early for swim practice everyday for years and years. You will need to master the basic strokes repeatedly, day in and day out, until your muscles become a well-oiled machine. Grit and perseverance can get you to where you want eventually, and all because of a series of small, daily, consistent actions that add up together to make up the bigger picture.

You can also apply this principle in helping you develop habits you desire. Or in other cases, eliminate undesirable habits you have acquired. If you decide to quit smoking, going cold turkey will almost always guarantee a relapse on your part. Once you have resolved to stop, think of the first few steps you can make such as slowly cutting off ties with people you associate your heavy smoking with.

If you’re used to smoking as you walk on the way to your workplace, try grabbing a cab, a public commute, or taking a car instead. This will instantly disassociate yourself with the learned habit of smoking while walking and divert it to something that’s less harmful and brings you closer to your end goal. If you continue to do the same things you’ve always done, you cannot expect to get different results.

If you really, truly want to achieve the success you badly want to achieve, then you must need to do something drastically different as well. Most of us

don’t realize that an effective action plan is only as good as the number of items and effort you put into translating it into reality. So the first step is to get the right mindset and make yourself commit to the plan you have created. A mindset that is bent on making the action plan work is already half of the success.

One of the most effective ways to ensure goals translate into habits is by creating a morning routine. A great start in the morning will ensure you will face the rest of the day in good, high spirits. If you fail to start your day right, it will impact your mood adversely for the rest of the day. You may find yourself having a hard time focusing and facing tasks to accomplish. By the end of the day, you may push your goals aside and completely fail to complete the tasks you need to do.

So what makes a good morning routine, then? The first step is knowing what works for you and what doesn’t. Everyone is wired differently, so another person’s morning routine may not ensure a good start to the day as it would for another. When making a morning routine, make sure you work around the things you consider to be most important in your life. You must first resolve to dedicate yourself to stick to the same routine each and every single day.

This takes a lot of work and willpower but by sticking to the plan, no matter what you’re feeling on a particular day, it can help you get closer to your goal. Next, develop a mantra that you can speak out loud, such as “I will succeed in reaching my goals today” or “I have what it takes to achieve the things I want to happen.” Figure out what your personal code is, and say it in front of the mirror every morning to help you mentally prepare for the day ahead.

Make a list of your goals and review this list every morning. It will reinforce the actions you need to undertake in order to accomplish your goals. If you feel yourself slipping in and out of the drive to succeed, remind yourself why you started in the first place. Remember why you need to work so hard on a daily basis and how important a particular goal is to you. This is in the hope you will accept the fact you need to do what needs to be done on a given day.

One cannot function well when the mind and body are not feeling great. Take some time to heal your mind and meditate, even just for a few minutes in the morning. Clear your mind of stress and start the morning with happy thoughts and positivity. Another strategy is to tap into physical exercise. It is one of the best ways to calm the mind from racing thoughts, as well as get your body pumping to start the day.

Eating well also helps condition your body and mind for the day ahead. With the right foods, you will be far from physical ailments that can have a negative impact on your ability to stay to your routine every morning.

Next, visualize your success. Picture being exactly where you want to be, until it becomes more and more realistic. An advantage to this exercise is you can have the ability to keep negative thoughts at bay. When prioritizing tasks, always try to do the hardest ones first because often these are the ones you keep putting off or simply do not want to deal with. But if you get it out of the way first, your entire day can turn out for the better and you can focus on enjoying the rest of your day.

Begin by deciding to start making a habit to work toward your goals and fashion them into a systematic process each and everyday. Break down your goals into specific timelines such as making yearly goals into monthly, weekly, or even daily tasks. Yearly goals are usually the easiest as it reflects the drastic change you want to see throughout the course of the year ahead of you. Put these goals into writing first so it will help you stay on track as you may easily get lost in all the other things you need to do. Then break these down into small, doable, SMART tasks.

An effective way in turning goals into habits is to set-up a journaling system. Here, we will take a look into what is called the Minimalist Journaling System, which helps you motivate and stick to any habit you resolve to do.

Step 1: Start by looking into what is the most important thing you need to start doing in your professional and personal life that will create a very big impact. This will guide you to where you will define your first habit stacking exercise. You may find you already know what it is, and if you don’t, chances are, it’s already inside you, waiting to be accessed.

Step 2: Take a journal – it can be an existing one, or a new spreadsheet, either way is fine. What's important is that you have enough black pages to fill the journal with small boxes. Draw several boxes that will represent one day in your life per box. It will look some sort of a mobile phone interface, with blocks of apps, waiting to be used. In your case, your "apps" are waiting to be filled in.

Step 3: Next, choose a symbol to represent the boxes. Let's say, you plan to do habit stacking on your eating habits, so your symbol will be an apple. Draw this small symbol on the upper right-hand corner of your box later on, and make sure it is small enough so the box still has space for you to write on, but big enough you can see what the icon is for. You may use other symbols such as a heart shape for personal relationships, a star for professional growth, or a bed for sleeping patterns. The rest is simply up to you.

Step 4: Now it is time to do your habit every day. For each day you successfully do it, mark a square with the symbol you have assigned. If you did not do the habit, just leave it blank. Make it a point to open your journal and write on it everyday. Yu will only need to dedicate at least 10 seconds of your time at the end of the day to fill it in.

And if you see that you have skipped a day, make it a point to get back on track the next day. This is the crucial step that will help you build consistency. Repeat the process until you have filled up consecutive boxes with the same symbol everyday for a couple of weeks. This is the way which you can build upon your new habit and keep yourself on track.

Step 5: Sometimes, one goal may be closely tied to another. It may be in the same field or one may just be a direct consequence of the other habit. If this is the case you can try to deepen the previous habit by putting the symbol related to it simultaneously with the other. For example, if your previous habits were mainly for productivity, but you find yourself benefitting from it in a healthy way, you way also put the symbol for health right next to it. It will then look like two "apps" are in one box that have been successfully completed by you.

Step 6: Here’s the most interesting part – once you are comfortable with your use of the tracker, you can add as many habits as you want to the system. But be careful not to overdo this. Remember that a successful habit stacking process involves consistency, and if you spread yourself too thin doing all these things, you may compromise quality and the habits that you have already deeply formed.

The purpose of the boxes is not only to encourage consistency, but also to give you an expanded perspective over your life. True growth takes time – so much time – and it is important you don’t push yourself too hard on the way to the top or you’ll get burned out. Take it gradually, and take it one day at a time.

Step 7: You may also want to add some elements to this minimalist tracker journal by making it interesting. Remember that there is enough space in the whole box for other things to write on. You may add a few keywords that describe what made that specific day memorable. If you are improving your well-being with your habits, then draw an emoji about how you feel that day – your mood, your overall sense of self.

You may write in the number of meaningful interactions you have encountered that day, assigning a productivity grade for yourself, the time you woke up and the time you went to bed, etc. The add-ons are simply up to you, as long as you keep in tune with the purpose of the whole Minimalist Journaling System.

Chapter 4: Thursday - Learning to Avoid Mistakes in Goal Setting

It is common for anyone to have ups and downs when trying to achieve a certain task. While the passion may be there, there are times when we just simply fail to keep up with consistently doing our smaller tasks. Since the success of habit stacking relies on repeated efforts, done daily and consistently, having a major step back can really break our streak. To avoid this, here are all too common mistakes in goal settings you need to avoid so that you will experience slip-ups less often.

Regardless of what your goals are, people fall out of focus. Sometimes, distractions can veer us away form the prize at hand. It might be because you are having a difficult time, or that other things going on in your life distract you. But recognizing you are falling out of focus is an important step and this helps you to get back on your feet the moment it happens.

It is important to write down your daily tasks because without it, you fail to take stock of the situation. Assess how habit stacking processes can help you out and figure out the things you might do differently in order to affect the positive change you wish to see.

Having goals is a good thing, but having too much of it can be a problem. It may become extremely difficult for anyone to achieve it all, especially when you have a long list of tasks to do. Be realistic, prioritize what needs to be done first, and limit these goals. Trying to do everything at once can often lead to frustration. Pick out the most important ones to do first, then move on the next few only when you've achieved the first few.

Giving in to lack of motivation is one of the worst things you can do in the process of habit stacking. It basically ensures you will not be able to get anything done and is form of self-sabotage on your part. If this is a problem, you will need to go back to your "why." If it happens more often and regularly, then you may not be as passionate about the change you want to see as you first thought. Try to re-evaluate your goal to see if it's something you really want. Chances are, consistent lack of motivation can be an indicating factor that you were half-hearted about your resolve in the first place.

Not setting boundaries can be dangerous. Part of staying focused and motivated lies on clear-cut boundaries. When you begin to realize the things that are vitally important to you are not up on the same list as other people around you, you may find that this contrast in professional and personal goals may end in conflict. Because of this, boundaries help to let everyone else see you are committed and dedicated to seeing everything else through despite the fact it's not what everyone necessarily expects from you.

It is very common for people to start their habit stacking goals off with a bang, and then decrease their interest little by little as things move along.

Again, the bottom line is you have to see things through despite the outside circumstances that negatively affect your drive. Plough through despite the feelings of being overwhelmed or you will be left stuck in the same pattern for a long time.

Habit stacking is a practice in consistency, and one of the most effective ways to achieve this is to review your list of goals daily. Pay close attention to how specific you are when writing your goals, as this can provide you with something to look back on and ensure you take the appropriate steps to achieve your list on a daily basis.

When you decide to do habit stacking in order to change a behavior, or achieve a goal, you must do it for the right reasons. There is no sense in being miserable with what you're doing if that's not really what you want to do. Make sure when you do sit down and set your goals, you are doing it for yourself and not for anyone else but you.

Be willing enough to take the risk, as this is the only way you can accomplish things. Sure, you should minimize risks as often as you can, but taking that leap of faith sets the difference between achieving success and staying exactly where you are at that moment in your life.

What do you when setbacks happen? Do you give up or do shrug it off and keep moving forward? Learning form failures and past mistakes doesn't weaken us, instead they only serve to make us stronger in the face of adversity. As long as you keep trying, you will never fail. Giving up is where the real failure is. Apart from standing back up, you will also need to know how to evaluate that setback. Otherwise, you will be faced with the same situation and you will do the same things over and over again. Learn and grow from it instead.

Doing things alone can only do so much. There are times when we all just need a little help form our friends, family, and loved ones. Know when to ask for help and to accept help when it is being offered.

You have set out SMART goals as your guide, but it shouldn't mean that you will not exercise flexibility in adapting at a moment's notice. Learn to adjust and you will be better equipped to handle whatever comes along.

Goal Setting - Can It Increase Your Self-Esteem?

Would it surprise you to know your self-esteem (the value you place on yourself) determine whether you reach your goals or not?

The opposite is equally true: Setting and achieving realistic goals will boost your self-esteem substantially. Don't believe me? Just think about the last time you struggled to master a new skill. At the very point of exasperation, when you are at your wits end, if you persevere despite being sorely tempted to give up... Suddenly, miraculously, it all falls into place...

Did you feel smart, surprised, rewarded, fulfilled, elated and as if you were going to explode with pride? Did you feel like you could easily build on this achievement? That's how you'll feel every time you set and achieve a personal goal. It will be even more satisfying if you focused your energies purposefully onto achieving something specific and concrete.

"Dare to dream! If you did not have the capability to make your wildest wishes come true, your mind would not have the capacity to conjure such ideas in the first place. There is no limitation on what you can potentially achieve, except for the limitation you choose to impose on your own imagination. What you believe to be possible will always come to pass - to the extent that you deem it possible. It really is as simple as that?" Anthon St. Maarten

People who dare to dream know that setting and achieving goals, however small and insignificant, boost their confidence on a day to day basis. Each time you achieve a purposefully set objective, your confidence in your own ability grows.

Although I knew about, and even occasionally used the goal setting procedure, I severely underestimated the potential of this powerful method. Too much hassle, I thought. I have since been converted, not only by my own experience, but also by the overwhelmingly positive reaction from my clients.

Your self-esteem, awareness, ability to communicate, energy and responsibility can all be amplified by your use of goal setting. Developing

and maintaining our self-esteem is one of the challenges every one faces sooner or later. Confidence comes from knowing that we can successfully complete what we set out to do. It results from experience, the experience of meeting our goals effectively.

We must have some way to evaluate an experience, some way to know whether it was valuable or not. This is where goal-setting comes in. Setting realistic goals, working toward them and finally achieving them are superb learning experiences.

We feel good about ourselves when we meet our goals. Which in turn makes it easier for us to reach our next goals, and so the effect soon snow-balls.

But how does one set achievable goals?

How to set and achieve any goal

Perhaps our very human essence is oriented towards the achievement of goals. Human endeavour is measured by some of its greatest achievements. What do you want to achieve? Without a set of key goals life can become a case of living randomly from day to day. Any goal whether a small one en-route to achieving a key goal, or indeed a key goal should be SMART.

SMART GOALS are:

-Specific: State each goal as a positive unambiguous statement

-Measurable: Break the key goal down to measurable small steps

-Attainable: Make sure it fits in with your current work, family and financial commitments

-Relevant and Realistic: Physically and mentally possible

-Time bound: Aim to achieve the various stages of your goal according to a preconceived timescale

Specific - Setting detailed and precise objectives

State each goal as an unambiguous, positive statement. The process of reaching goals includes an initial evaluation, frequent reviews, and progress checks. Goals should be set down in specific terms so they appear as crystallized pictures in the mind rather than fuzzy apparitions on the horizon. "I have to loose weight" sounds like a project of enormous proportions with nowhere to start. Setting a more concrete, short-term goal is more effective.

For example, decide that at the end of two weeks you will have lost 2 kg. This is a more a more specific, practical, and therefore attainable goal. What precisely do you want to achieve? I want to be an Olympic competitor is not a performance goal; it's actually the outcome of a goal. Check that you objectives are specific and not just outcomes.

Measurable - Structuring goals that can be measured

So you want to walk for exercise... good! What does measured success look like? How far and how often do you want to walk? How would you know that you remain en-route to success and how would you prove this to yourself? You will need to break the key goal down to measurable small steps, like deciding you will walk 5 km 5 days out of 7. The best way to keep track of your achievements and progress towards your key goal is to keep an exercise diary.

Achievable - Is this objective practically possible?

By ensuring your goals are achievable I am not suggesting that you seek to downgrade them so that they become too easy to achieve. Instead you should check what you are aiming to achieve against the other demands on your time, finances and talent. Keep the low-level goals you are working towards small and achievable. If a goal is too large, then it can seem you are not making progress towards it. Keeping goals small and incremental gives more opportunities for reward. Derive today's goals from larger ones.

Set priorities: When you have several goals, give each a priority. This helps you to avoid feeling overwhelmed by too many goals, and helps to direct your attention to the most important ones. Organization and prioritizing are imperative to the success of the true achiever. Attending to the most

important items on your "TO DO" list will result in maximum productivity. Less essential items can be ticked off as time permits. Plan the work and then work the plan.

Relevant and Realistic - Are you being honest with yourself?

Is it realistic to learn the piano to concert pianist level? Is it realistic to target yourself to rune a mufti-million pound corporation? Do you have the right personality; can you manage the pressure and worry when things are not quite going to plan? This is the essence of realistic. Set performance goals, not outcome goals: You should take care to set goals over which you have as much control as possible. There is nothing more dispiriting than failing to achieve a personal goal for reasons beyond your control.

If you base your goals on personal performance, then you can keep control over the achievement of your goals and draw satisfaction from them. It is important to set goals that you can achieve. All sorts of people (trainers, parents, media, and society) can set unrealistic goals for you. They will often do this in ignorance of your own desires and ambitions. Alternatively you may set goals that are too high, because you may not appreciate either the obstacles in the way, or understand quite how much skill you need to develop to achieve a particular level of performance.

Time bound- has a starting date and an ETA

You should aim to achieve the various stages of your goal according to a preconceived timescale. Unless you build these parameters into your goals you could end up paralysed by procrastination and end up more frustrated and un-focused than before you started. Set a precise goal, putting in dates, times and amounts so that you can measure your achievement. If you do this, you will know exactly when you have achieved the goal and celebrate your accomplishment, and can take complete satisfaction from having achieved it. Formulate short, medium and long-term goals.

Plotting out your goals in this manner will make you aware of the skills, financial aid and time you will need along the way. Develop short and mid-term goals to help you build those skills. You will begin to make decisions based on whether or not those choices will be beneficial to your long-term

goals. If you just drift along in the sea of choices, allowing the tide of every day life to chart your course, it would only be by co-incidence that you will reach your destination or even recognize it when you arrive. As you achieve each step, however small towards your goal, your confidence will grow and solidify.

"Perfection of effort is not required, by the way. It is the consistency of attempting to work these tools that brings the progress. It's like anything else. If I want to tone muscle, lifting a ten-pound weight a few times every day will move me toward my goal much quicker than hoisting a fifty-pound barbell once a week. Yes, it really is true: "Slow and steady wins the race." Just try a little, every day. You'll see." Holly Mosier

Chapter 5: Friday - Accomplishing Goals and Boosting Motivation

One of the biggest challenges in meeting any goal is finding the commitment and motivation to do so. Whether the goal is productivity-related, changing a habit, getting fit, or increasing happiness, motivation plays a crucial part in the success of goal accomplishment. Sticking with a goal no matter how long it takes for you to reach it takes a lot of patience and energy. It also almost always assures you that you will get there eventually.

But the challenge is constantly channeling all that energy from how motivated you are, and no one is always that eager to wake up each and every day to do the same things over and over again. There will be down days, and days when you just don't want to do anything at all. Days when you get tired, days when you don't feel great about yourself, and just about any day that stops you from accomplishing the task you have set out to do.

And while you know that motivation is key to all of these, it's not always easy to find it, day in and day out. It is what drives you to reach your goals, and sometimes, motivation alone can be enough to keep you going when the going get gets tough. In its best form, motivation can be a positive driving force for you. It will push you to work harder even under pressure, and sometimes do a much better job.

Regardless of whether you love and enjoy doing something or not, there is only so long you can go trying to motivate yourself to keep doing it. So it's not always a lack of passion towards a certain goal, but rather a lack of motivation. And you shouldn't feel about this when it happens because it's completely normal. What's more alarming is if you allow that feeling to persist until you lose interest in finishing your ultimate goal.

When you are doing habit-stacking activities, you will need enough energy to keep yourself motivated enough. Here are some ways in which you can boost energy and successfully improve your motivation:

Get enough sleep

There is no way you will have the energy you need to get you through the day without proper rest. A good night's sleep can help reset your body and mind, and refresh your whole self for the tasks ahead of you. Remember the importance of having a good morning routine? Well, a lack of sleep can make you cranky in the morning and mess up the rest of your day.

Sleep plays a big role in the repair of brain cells, thus improving your focus, memory, and learning. Without enough of it, it's difficult to process new information. Chronic lack of sleep can also increase the chances of having a mood disorder. So allow your brain to catch up by giving it the rest it deserves.

Eat right and eat healthy

Energy comes from the food we eat, but not everything provides us with the boost we need. To get you through the demands of your daily tasks, stay away from processed food and those with high salt and sugar content. The three main nutrients used for energy are carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, get a lot of protein, and don't skimp out on water therapy. Drinking plenty of water can prevent your body from getting dehydrated and boosts your energy for the rest of the day.

Get moving

Regular physical activity helps increase circulation and blood flow to all parts in your body. When this happens, there is enough oxygenation everywhere in your body, which helps improve the functioning of organs better. Exercise also triggers the release of endorphins, also called "happy hormones," which are our body's natural hormones that contributes to the feeling of euphoria and happiness.

Nurture relationships

Those with excellent interpersonal relationships are able to forge strong bonds with others, communicate better, and require less energy to get things accomplished. It also improves your mood because the healthy and loving

relationships you are surrounded with can flow right through you and into your work and productivity.

Don’t forget to delegate

When things get too overwhelming for you, it is best to take a step back, re-evaluate, and delegate as needed. It is impossible to do everything all at once, and certainly you will end up feeling tired if you do so, but when you delegate, you will be easing your mind and body of certain tasks that don’t even require your attention. This gives you the chance to truly focus on what matters most.

Visualize your success, especially when you feel a drop in your energy levels

When you remember your goals and why you want to do the things you do, it can give you the mental push to go ahead and get things done. A lack of focus can also be alleviated with this technique, as it will help you shut out all other distractions and zero in on the task at hand, the one that’s waiting in front of you.

When everything gets too tiring, take a break

We’re only humans, and our energy, just like batteries, need recharging every now and then. Take a short nap, go on a brisk walk, play with your pet, read a book, or listen to your favorite music. Do whatever it is that makes you feel refreshed. You will come back with a renewed zest and passion to finish your tasks the moment you step right back into the game.

Goal Settings: How To Set Goals You Can Achieve

If you want to set goals you can achieve, do not focus on them. It seems that these words go against everything that is ever said about goals. A lot of people are talking about the power of setting goals but not many about how to achieve them. Yet, it is a fundamental key to an all lifelong success plan.

So how can you set goals? How can you achieve them? What can you do today, tomorrow or this week that will get you closer to your goals? And

what is the power of goal setting?

The challenge, of course, is we hear about setting goals so often that we tend to take it just a little bit for granted. When you get yourself to a point where you have heard it so many times, you act like you know all about it. But you need to be careful not to get caught in that trap called the law of familiarity. It is the place where you get so used to it.

The prevailing thought is to think about what you want to do. Then, you set goals, write them down, stay focused on them and go forward. You check your list over and over again, come back to it, adjust it, and that is how you achieve your goals. But I believe it is not the way goals should be attained.

Some people even do it once a year, when they make a New Year resolution. They set goals, and they do forget it until a year later. These people usually have no power. They take the power of goals too lightly which brings us to some basics.

You have to realize you have to practice the fundamentals daily. Think about the great coaches in sports history for example. They often teach the basics to people that are already the best at what they do. These top trainers make them go through the fundamentals over and over again, hundreds of time, day after day until they can do it at a crucial moment.

Back to Basics

Should I remind you about Mr. Miyagi in "Karate Kid" with his wax on wax off? When you set goals, you have to go back and go through the basics every day. So that when you do it again, you understand how to do it even more efficiently.

"Repetition is the mother of all skills" - Tony Robbins

If you want to reach your set goals, you have to master your skills. The reason being is that along with your journey, you make new distinctions, set new goals or even change them. So do not think for a second that you already know how to achieve them.

The bottom line often is that most people do not have a clearly defined set of objectives anyway. You need to go from the frame of mastering simple things over and over to achieve set goals. So, you have to break through the bonds of the past and look in a whole new way where you understand you have to do whatever it takes and not be bored by basics.

Setting Goals is Powerful

Why do we need to set goals and use them? Are they important? The answer is that when you set objectives for yourself, you create the future in advance. You form your destiny and shape your life. Whether we know it or not, we all have goals.

As a result, know that your goals are affecting you. The problem is that some people have lousy goals. Those get you through the day, the week, the month or help you pay the bills but are not the kind of objectives that inspire you or make you jump out of bed in the morning. These goals do not create the drive you need to achieve something greater.

You must realize that very few people have a particular plan or even written goals. So, when you set goals, I mean real aims, you can create the power to grow, develop and expand your success. You must have something out there that is compelling enough to draw you forth and transform your life.

Reflection Time to Set Goals

Next, you have to know why you set goals, why you are doing it, and what you are moving towards. The reason being is that if you do not, you won't get the most out of yourself. You have to take time to reflect so that you can set goals. It does not matter if you reflect for days; what is important is that you do it.

Then, take two or three days to design plans and how you can achieve them. You have to set goals that are well beyond your current ability or skill. It does not matter if you have yet no idea on how to make them happen. You simply have to operate from a principle that is talked about all over the world, regardless of what you believe.

It is a common law which is the power of absolute belief and faith. If you can get inspired enough and find a goal that is exciting enough, you can figure out a way to make it happen. Even if right now it seems impossible, you can pull it off.

Set Goals in Every Area of Life

You have to set goals for yourself in every area of your life. Set them personally, emotionally, socially, physically and financially. Create an ultimate aim and what you want right now. You need objectives on who you want to be, how much happiness or passion you desire, and how you want to live every single day.

No matter the pages it could take, you should describe everything in detail, even the person of your dreams. And yes, you might create a lot of limitations or absurd goals, but if after reviewing those, your goals still make sense to you, you should believe in their realization. You have to design your own road map necessary for success.

Now you have to implement them. Of course, some of your goals will not work out, but you can achieve most of your set goals. A massive change will occur as you follow through. Your level of confidence will boost, and your faith, as well as your abilities, will change radically.

Behaviors vs. Focus for Set Goals

You need to realize that when you set goals for yourself, they are outside of your control, so if you spend too much time focusing on your goals, you never achieve them. By contrast, if you focus on your behaviors rather than your goals, then you can achieve your objectives.

You alone can see to your behaviors. They are what you can control. So, you have to ignore the part of your goals that you cannot influence and focus on the part that is in your control which is behaviors. Once you focus on your actions, day after day, you begin to learn all the information you need to reach your set goals.

When you visualize your goal as already achieved, it puts you in a position where you can focus on a plan to make it. Behaviors are short term based when we set goals; it is usually seven days. So you have to think about what you can do today, tomorrow and this week, write them down and go for it.

The Define Precision of Goals

You should act with intelligence because what is real today is based on your past, on your previous experiences. So if you limit your future based on your past, you won't go anywhere. You need to set goals that are big enough to drive you. So do not stop and go "How do I do it?"

It is not the first step. The initial phase is getting it all written down, and if you do that, you can create and shape your own paradise, whatever you choose to create. It starts with a simple process of taking these generalized dream impulses and then to define them with more precision.

That is the power of goal setting. There is something beyond just what you understand of writing something down. Something happens! You become a creator when you set goals and put them down on paper. You get a clear vision while you can make them happen.

Therefore, you need to ensure that you not only set goals, but you get entirely clear why you want them. it is a fact that there is a fundamental core in goal-setting that can change your life and the answer is that purpose is stronger than the outcome.

The Motivation behind Set Goals

The meaning of it is that the purpose of goals is not so you get things but rather of what they will make of you as a person. I am in the phase of realizing that right now. Most people set goals blindly. They desire and focus on material things. And there is nothing wrong with that; I want you to have as many things as you want because that is part of life too.

It is part of the manifestation process of creating results when you set goals. But if all you do is to focus on getting things, it may cost you your integrity

of who you want to be, of what you want to create in your life. So you got to be careful!

In conclusion, make sure that when you set a goal, you know why you are doing it. Making money motivates only so much, but becoming a person who can manifest abundance financially and physically for themselves and the people around them is rather more fulfilling. Having the freedom that money can give or have the ability to give or help others by paying it forward usually motivates more than just anything else.

So when you set goals, do not take them for granted. Focus on what you can control and let the universe take care of the rest. Do act on your intentions seriously and consistently to achieve them. I know you can go well beyond what you can dream of, I believe in you!

Chapter 6: Saturday - Practicing Self-Discipline

An ounce of self–discipline is enough to make everything possible, but without it, even the most menial and simplest goal can seem impossible to reach. Self-discipline is defined as having the ability to control your thoughts and emotions, which leads to controlling behavior, and have yourself take action in a particular way.

Usually this pertains to a positive change or something that veers you off from a negative direction. It is closely related to having willpower, which is the ability to delay gratification. This means that in order to achieve long-term goals, one should be able to resist short-term temptations. It also means one should be able to control his or her emotions, that despite negative feelings, one is able to employ a cool head in the face of difficult situations. Thus, willpower is a conscious regulation of yourself that requires effort and self-discipline.

Because we are humans, there many instances where we find ourselves to be lacking in self-discipline or willpower. For example, you know you will have to wake up early the next day for work, but you find yourself still

watching television at past midnight. Or when you resolve to get into a fitness program, but you can't wait for cheat day and just "have a bite" of a food that's not part of your diet plan. Or when you're told by your doctor to stop smoking, but the sight or smell of a cigarette makes you give in, thus making you fall back into the habit.

There are so many more examples, and I'm sure we all been there. But when we decide to do habit stacking in order to successfully incorporate a desirable habit, we need a lot of self-discipline and willpower. It is what sets one man apart from all others, lifts him up from mediocrity, and despite others having the talents or resources to do the same goal, those with self-discipline with always find them themselves successful in achieving the things they want.

The first thing you need to do is to establish the motivation for change. It has to be compelling enough, like say you are avoiding further medical complications so you decide to quit smoking. Or it you have to be passionate about it, like if your life-long dream is to compete professionally in swimming, so you practice every day. Whatever the motivation is, it has to be strong and compelling enough for you to keep the ball rolling despite the odds.

Next, you need to monitor your behavior towards that goal. You need to want it bad enough so that you will exhaust all means to reach your goal. The last component is willpower. It is the single most critical thing that helps you get things done and get you closer to your desired outcome.

Your ability to set yourself some clear goals and work towards them every single day will already guarantee your success, and no other factor comes even close to sheer willpower. Just as a strong building requires a good foundation, a good amount of self-discipline should start early on, even before you decide to work on your goals.

When you plan to aim for drastic changes in your life, failure often tags along. Being too ambitious helps you move faster and more aggressive, but this can lead to false hope syndrome. False hope syndrome is when you set unrealistic expectations about yourself and your goals. While it's great to be optimistic, it's better to be realistic. For example, you plan to completely

stop smoking in a week, but you are so used to smoking 2 packs of cigarettes per day. While the intention is admirable, it just simply isn't realistic.

False hope syndrome makes it difficult for the person who embarks on a habit-stacking journey to achieve goals with the current resources or timelines he has on hand. People tend to think very highly about their goals. They want to achieve better and bigger things in faster ways. While there is nothing bad about thinking big, the whole picture has to be taken into account. When one is being unmindful of the time and resources it takes to achieve a goal, it provides the perfect recipes for a quick burnout.

This will eventually lead to quitting. It the becomes a vicious cycle, one that makes people constantly fall victim to the syndrome that makes frequent attempts to change themselves, yet fail to do so. Instead of going all out, plan your success in small steps, in a process, in a continuous wave of little actions that can lead to bigger results.

Willpower takes a lot of energy, and when you're stressed, it eats up everything – your time, your drive, your interest, your passion to keep moving forward. You might have noticed that during the most stressful times in your life, you tend to indulge in unhealthy and negative habits – overeating or not eating enough, smoking, drinking, or doing any other indulges of different kinds in order to feel good. These actions can be very, very difficult to control.

By doing these things, we experience a momentary feeling of satisfaction that takes us away from the things that stress us. But these stress responses take up so much of your willpower. Stress impairs the emotional control of a person, thus making it hard for one to perform the planned tasks. Therefore, in order to practice self-discipline effectively, you need to work on reducing your own stress levels.

One of the main reasons why people experience a lack of self-discipline is that we tend to allocate more time to activities that they actually need to get it done. Because of this, there is the temptation of setting aside the work for later, leading to cramming to finish everything.

To counter, allocate lesser time for any particular activity, whether it's urgent or not, and this will greatly reduce the possibility of you drifting away from the work that needs to be done. Now that you are made aware of why self-discipline have tendencies to fail, you should now have a clearer grasp of the things you should and should not do in order to hold on to your willpower.

The environment you are in also plays a big part in your self-control capabilities. Let's say you want to lose weight, but your kitchen is full of sweets and other unhealthy food because the people you live with regularly snack on these things. In such a scenario, it will be very difficult for you to lose the weight you intend to. It will take self-control and willpower, but these things also deplete in the long run. The energy you could have used for exercising may be spent in controlling and resisting your temptations, leading to self-control fatigue.

You need to be in an environment that supports the behavior or habits you want to develop. Similarly, social influence and social network structures play a very significant role in modeling behaviors. But does this mean you should abandon your family or friends that do not support the environment you want to change? Of course not! What you can do is limit your association only in relation to those activities.

For example, you want to develop a habit of waking up early, but your partner often stays up late at night watching TV. You can suggest the TV be moved outside the bedroom so you can sleep in, or decide to sleep in another bedroom. In this way, the association will be cut off, and you can successfully follow through with your plan. To further your habit-stacking activities, seek out local places where like-minded people hang out and join that group.

When we talk about self-control, there is always the risk of temptations. Removing or staying away from these distractions in your surrounding environment is an important first step when working towards self-discipline. The most dangerous thing is to assume you have an endless supply and reservoir of self-discipline, so instead of spending energy on trivial everyday things, save this for the utilization of your willpower for high-value decisions. Also, make changes to create a supporting

environment and you will be amazed to see the changes that come along with it.

To further enhance your self-control and willpower, here are other activities you can do:

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is not something that is just restricted to the spiritual journey undertaken by Buddhist monks. Mindfulness is the awareness that arises through the simple act of paying attention on purpose, being in the moment, and being present in a non-judgmental manner. It is a process of travelling inside your mind and body to enhance awareness around you, about your thoughts and emotions within yourself.

Activities for mindfulness include body scan, mindful yoga, and sitting meditation. These activities can be performed every day for at least thirty to forty minutes. When one gets better at meditating, it helps develop a wide range of self-control skills such as focus, attention, impulse control, stress management, self-awareness, and focus. Meditation can easily be done by sitting silently with your spine straight and being focused on your breath.

Quality sleep

If you constantly deprive your body from getting enough rest and sleep at night, you are already in the throes of developing anxiety and stress. Sleep deprivation affects your mood, cognitive performance, and motor function. It also affects your working memory, higher cognitive functions, and executive attention. Lack of sleep leads to feelings of exhaustion simply because your cells will have trouble absorbing the glucose they need from the main bloodstream if you are tired. In such situation the body wants to preserve what little energy is left for your brain in any emergency situation.

It’s not just the number of hours of sleep that matters, but the quality of it as well. to get a restful night sleep, you may enjoy only a light meal in the evening because having a lesser portion of a meal means your brain will not be spending all its energy on digestion. Go for a light walk after dinner, and

try to be in bed by 10 pm. Write down your thoughts for the day in a journal before going to bed so your mind doesn't keep you awake.

Get up and start moving

Physical exercise has a lot of benefits for your body, at such an inexpensive cost. Moving around has the potential to improve your self-control to a large extent. Your body can get fit while your mental strength improves. It also helps relieve stress, unhealthy cravings, and is a powerful anti-depressant.

Start the day by eating the "ugliest frog" first

No, this is not some advice about going on an exotic diet. This simply means that you should do the most difficult, yet high-value activity first thing in the morning. When done, all other activities for the rest of the day will seem significantly less important and will help you focus all your energy and willpower at its peak during early mornings. After a full night of sleep, you are at your best, so take advantage of this surge in energy and go out and do the hardest and most important things first.

While you do not need to do all these activities immediately, you can start first by choosing one that resonates most with you. Make it part of your routine and eventually, you will see some improvements in your self-control abilities in a matter of weeks.

6 Ways to Develop Self-Discipline

1. Take consistent little steps:

As it requires little but consistent steps to grow, so does it requires little steps to take to grow into becoming a disciplined person. You can not be discipline overnight. People who have tried it give up and reverse back to their early life of indiscipline. Discipline takes time to develop, but you have to be determined. The more you try to take disciplined steps, the stronger you become.

For example, start with something small that makes you feel happy. It could be exercising for 15 minutes daily, waking up 10 minutes earlier etc. If you smoke 20 sticks of cigarette daily and you want to discipline yourself to quite that habit, you may start by smoking 19 sticks, latter 18 and lessen a stick daily. With time you will stop smoking eventually. If you try to stop smoking at once, you will end up going back to it again. The point is you should take baby steps daily.

2. Try not to Procrastinate:

Make a list of what you hope to achieve and determine to take action immediately. Set deadlines and make a promise to yourself that you will stick to your plans until you achieve them. Try not to procrastinate. Procrastination weakens you resolve to be disciplined. When you achieve little goals, it strengthens you inner resolve to set more goals and achieve them. The cumulative effect is you increase you mind power, which enables you to set bigger goals and achieve them.

3. Every Day Counts:

Strive to practice discipline in little thing daily. It could be waking up early in the morning at 5am to study for at least 15 minutes before doing exercise for another 15 minutes. If you skip a day, you discipline level will fall and this would further weaken your resolve to continue.

4. Visualize your final achievement:

Take some time to visualize how it would look like when you achieve you goals and aspirations as a result of taking disciplined steps daily. Outline what it would take to achieve your goals and take action immediately. The process of visualization helps you to maintain momentum even when you are distracted with desires that are not important.

5. Get someone to coach you:

Get someone to monitor your progress. It could be a friend of someone who is a trained coach. The benefits of having a coach are numerous. A coach points out where you are going wrong and put you on track. Through that

means, you rate of growth becomes faster compared to when you are developing at your pace.

6. Learn to deny Instant gratifications:

Practice the habit of turning down some of your desires that are pleasurable. If you like watching television endlessly, limit the hours you spend on the TV screen, this can be achieved faster by fixing a time limit. Walk away from habits that decrease your resolve to be discipline; for example like taking too much alcohol. Deny yourself of some pleasure and force yourself to do what is important at the moment. Before taking action, think first. Think about the long-term effects of your action.

Self discipline requires effort on you path. Though it may not be easy initially, but with persistence, you will master it and take total control of your life.

Chapter 7: Sunday - Focusing on Repetition

By this point, you will have already understood the importance and the methods involved in habit stacking. Whether professionally or personally, our habits define us. They are powerful, as good habits can make us successful, while bad habits can be the cause of our failure. However, gaining control over these habits can help you become the person you want to be. It’s all a matter of consistency and commitment. As Aristotle once said, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.”

The more you practice behaviors, the more consistent you become in adopting them and trying to make them a permanent part of your life. After all, what’s the use of letting go of something after a few days of deciding to do it? Here are several ways that can help you become more consistent in your daily habits:

Do the 30-day rule

It takes approximately 21-30 days in order to master a habit. There is no fast way around it – you need to invest your time and energy to it slowly but surely. Going at it full speed from day 1 may seem overwhelming and cause you to burn out instead. Let's say you want to start working out at the gym. This can be a difficult task to keep up, but start slow. You may want to start with only 15 minutes of brisk walking, then later progress to 30 minutes. Days on, you might find yourself spending 30 minutes on exercise, then later progress to an hour and so on.

Give it a daily treatment

Whatever you decide to do, commit to do it every single day. With daily repeated effort, you will soon be able to establish good habits that are just as hard to break as bad habits. Try to work on it at the same time each and every day, until the action becomes so ingrained in you that it feels empty when you don't get the chance to do it.

Think about why you started

There are reasons why we do what we do, and reasons why we decide to change bad habits and adapt new ones. Whenever you find yourself without the drive to do the habit-stacking activities you've set out to do, think back on your why's. Once you get reminded of your reasons for these changes, you will find yourself motivated once again to repeat the behavior daily. Every reminder will help you get and stay on track. Along with this, you need to make the intention to master your own self. You need to control the temptation to laze around or to slack off so that you'll prevent yourself from going into old bad habits. Push your inner self to keep going at all costs.

Reward small successes

To further motivate you to do better and keep consistent, you can reward yourself for every little milestone or small achievement you make towards the path to getting the bigger prize. This will also make you work harder because you will be more motivated to keep on going. For example, if you've managed to finish your work on time every day for a week, you can delight in the fact that you won't need to spend overtime and unnecessary hours during the weekend trying to make up for back log.

Reward yourself by taking the weekend slow, spending it with the family, and just enjoying quality time with them. This will further motivate you to keep up the good work next week and on all other weeks to come. Eventually, your consistency will pay off as it will show in your quality and efficiency in the workplace and it will, in turn, reward you in your favor.

Keep reminding yourself

It is very easy to forget new goals, commitment, or habits. This gets even harder to do when we make them to ourselves. To remind yourself constantly, write down your goals and place them in areas that are visible to you. You may place them in front of the mirror, on your desk, on your office table, on your car, etc. You can even slip pieces of paper with the written goals inside your wallet, purse, or desk drawer. Or if you are constantly on your phone, set a daily reminder to alert you to it.

Consistency when done right can the most powerful thing you need to master in order to achieve. It requires that you commit yourself to a sustained effort of action over the long-term.

Consistency also says a lot about how dependable, reliable, and responsible you are about you, your life, and your decisions, actions, and choices. It means being present in the moment, with the long-term view that stretches out towards the self you want to be in the future, the one reaping the results and impact of all the small actions that you do today.

In habit stacking, you understand that you hold yourself accountable for all the responsibilities involved in achieving a certain goal, and that you do it without excuse and complaints. The only way for consistency to work is to do it repeatedly. Doing the same actions, habits, and rituals over and over again and gaining feedback, then working on these feedbacks and improving as you work towards your goal.

The main reason why people why people struggle with consistency is that they are only looking at it on a short-term basis. They don’t see any point in continuing once they don’t get immediate results. But no matter what skill you develop, only one thing remains true. Skills and habits do not develop

overnight. They are a product of a long and sustained practice, done on a regular, daily basis.

This is true for anyone who is a great piano player, or a winning athlete, or a renowned artist. This is true for anyone who has lost a couple of pounds, or who have been sober for years. Virtually anything that you set your mind to do can be made possible only with enough determination and consistency to commit to the work involved.

Because of everything that's been said in this chapter, it's very to think that consistency is just about repetition. However, it is so much more than that. Consistency is all about evolution and not just some mindless action that is being repeated over and over again. You need to grow and develop from these actions, as you will discover ways that can be improved and changed or adjusted accordingly to better fit your goals.

Instead of being obligated and doing these things mindlessly, you stay vigilant towards the little things that can go wrong, and be able to pinpoint the actions that need to improve. It means making incremental improvements and not just sticking to the status quo. In order to remain consistent, you need to address these three things:

- ✓ Focus on what is important rather than on what is easy or fun.
- ✓ Focus on doing one thing at a time, and not on multi-tasking.
- ✓ Focus on the execution of an activity, and not on the desired outcome.

Once you master and place all your focus on these three areas, you will be able to do what needs to be done without any distractions.

You've Got The Power!

We have been given enormous inner power to control basically everything in our lives. Yet, we struggle daily to overcome our fears, bad habits and negative emotions. Even our mental and psychological emotions are under

attack. Stress, anxiety disorders and depression are now part of our main stream way of life. This is not normal behavior for anyone to live.

We are constantly bombarded with many expectations; family life, career, money and wealth, relationships, as well as our physical, spiritual and emotional well being. This list can go on and on! Based on what is expected from each of us, society has not been too kind or forgiving at times. That is why many people within our society turn to drugs, violence and other negative forms of behavior. We try to please our spouses, bosses, children, our neighbors, our political party and everything else except ourselves. We feel that if we please everyone around us then we will receive love and acceptance.

I am here to let you know that you have the power to SNAP OUT OF IT! Stop living you life based on other people's expectations of you. You've got the power to say "NO" when you have to. When you feel defeated you've got the power to remind yourself that what you are presently facing will make you stronger! Turn on the positive thought mode within your mind and begin to LIVE! Begin to live your dreams. Begin again to cease the moment. When the negative feelings of doubt visit your thoughts, chase it and let it flee from you.

You are in control of everything in your life. The choices we make today, will affect our tomorrows. Begin now the process of living your life based on the positive; first be good to yourself, Secondly; always show kindness to others, and finally discover your inner power by praying and meditating daily. Don't allow the pressures of man-made "things" control you or your life. The only thing that will last for eternity are your positive footprints on the sands of time.

Conclusion: Habit Stacking

It’s no question that doing little things in small, consistent ways will eventually make a hug difference in the long haul. But there is no perfect execution, and no matter how good your intentions may be, there will be times you will fall short of expectations. Taking on a massive action in

order to change or adjust habits can be very taxing and draining to both one's body and mind, and this can easily lead to burning out.

But with the right mindset and understanding of what habit stacking is, you too can successfully reach the goals you want to achieve. Practicing is the key, and consistency is king. It's not about trying to be perfect, but rather, it's about honing and improving over time. Build on the previous day's work and look for ways you can learn and improve upon.

Learn to see yourself in a long-term view. Who do you want to be? What kind of person do you see for yourself in the future? Since the future is in your hands, make the decision to dedicate each small waking moment to being that person you imagine yourself to be. Over the course of many years, you will have then built the foundations of a far richer, happier, and more fulfilling life – the life you have always wanted. And it is all possible because you made small, consistent habits that helped you along the way. So now I ask – what will you choose to focus on today?

-- Logan Hawkins

Dear Reader,

Thanks for exploring this book with me. Now that you know how to practice habit stacking…

…why not learn how to beat procrastination and how to apply the ancient wisdom of Stoicism to modern life?

You'll love the other books on self-discipline, because they complement this one.

Get it now.

Thanks,

Logan

P.S. Reviews are like giving a warm hug to your favorite author. We love hugs.

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Causes of clutter and how to avoid them . . .

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Cleaning, room-to-room . . .

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